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Further Reaction on Yeltsin, Bush Proposals

Chernavin Compares Initiatives

LD0502190592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1705 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Roman Zadunayskiy and Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 5 Feb (TASS)—"The January disarmament initiatives by the Russian and U.S. Presidents are directed toward radically reducing nuclear confrontation, and I think that such steps are both right and sensible," Admiral of the Fleet Vladimir Chernavin, commander of the Commonwealth of Independent States Navy, declared today at a briefing for Russian and foreign journalists.

He pointed out that "while the possibility of military conflict remains, such radical changes in the Armed Forces must be carefully weighed and planned, and the economic consequences must assessed."

The admiral pointed to the substantial difference in the Russian and U.S. presidents' approaches to disarmament problems. Russia's principled stance amounts to observing the need for the complete destruction of all nuclear arsenals through gradual and parity-based reductions. The U.S. stance is different. "In essence, the question is: If the Commonwealth of Independent States abolishes all land-based ballistic missiles with multiple warheads (MIRVs)—and that, unlike the United States, is the basis of our strategic forces—then Washington will carry out a number of individual measures to reduce its strategic offensive weapons development programs," the admiral explained.

As for the problems of the Black Sea Fleet, Vladimir Chernavin noted that he "could not call successful" the talks on its fate. He went on to say that the question of transferring the Black Sea Fleet's main base and splitting it up had not been posed. As part of the Commonwealth's strategic forces, the Fleet must be ready to ensure the security of all the independent states. "This does not mean that Ukraine cannot have its own naval forces, and we are ready to help with resolving the practical tasks involved in creating them," the admiral emphasized.

As far as the oath of allegiance is concerned, to date, about 90 percent of young recruits for the Black Sea Fleet have voluntarily taken the oath of loyalty to the Commonwealth of Independent States. Most of the sailors are Ukrainians, Vladimir Chernavin stressed.

The commander of the Commonwealth of Independent States Navy noted the constructive and principled position of Russian deputies with regard to the fate of the Black Sea Fleet, and their help with resolving this complex problem at an interparliamentary level.

'Wholesale Disarmament' Resisted

PM0502122592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Feb 92 p 4

[By Tomas Kolesnichenko "View From Moscow" under the rubric "Now That The Cold War Is Over": "Question Left At Home"]

[Text] Leaders come up with staggering foreign policy initiatives whenever things are not going too well, to put it mildly, at home. This political axiom was confirmed again the other day. The U.S. and Russian presidents, whose ratings, according to a public opinion poll, are on the slide, exchanged new initiatives in the nuclear disarmament sphere, on a scale that would have been inconceivable before.

One need not bother to use the old analytical criteria, but, instead, cite a large selection of world press reactions, which include such epithets as "historic," "massive," "revolutionary," and so on and so forth. It has to be said that the radical reduction of nuclear arsenals fully merits them. There is also the fact that this topic is now at the center of world public attention, pushing all other issues into the background. And this is just the start. Today sees the meeting at Camp David, traditional capital of "personal diplomacy," where the leaders start to use one another's given names and talk in familiar terms. Let us hope "George" and "Bahris" [original reflects conventional non-Russian pronunciation of Boris] have further surprises for us...

But for all the euphoria, it is hard to get rid of the slightly bitter aftertaste. Washington and Moscow are not playing on equal terms. The stakes in the game are also different. "They" are grappling with temporary difficulties (without the quotation marks we now place these words in), whereas "we" are fighting for survival. They have a minor recession, which is still enough to dent the President's prestige, while our economy is in free-fall, with no end in sight.. Washington is celebrating victory. But Moscow?

We have heard it at last (here it is—the moment of truth): "The cold war did not 'end,' it was won." That is what Bush said in his Congress address. Not so long ago they were telling us that there were neither winners nor losers in the cold war. Reagan said so. But there is no need to stand on ceremony anymore. Particularly now that, as Bush said, the United States "is able to stop making the sacrifices we had to make when we had a sworn enemy, the former superpower. Now we can get on with things at home and put right what needs to be put right." Bush praised the U.S. taxpayer, who, apparently, was the chief victim of the cold war, who bore the brunt of it, and therefore deserves the accolade.

But here is the paradox: All Bush has to do is adopt Yeltsin's "counterplan" and the heroic taxpayer will be even better off. Incidentally, this is pointed out by many observers. One of them in THE WASHINGTON POST actually writes: "The rivals from the Democratic Party and others will probably point out that Bush could secure more radical cuts—and faster ones—both in the nuclear arsenal and in the military budget as a whole." Why is he not doing so? Why does Washington's reaction to the Russian proposals remind us so much of days gone by? They are "interesting," "promising," "being studied"... no more than that. Finally, why are our proposals not being accepted, why will Washington not agree to wholesale disarmament, even though this is entirely possible from the military viewpoint, since there is no threat from the former USSR any more?

The U.S. strategic plan resides in the answers to these questions. America, which won the cold war, is prepared to pay to remain the sole superpower. Not just today, but on into the 21st century.

At the moment possession of nuclear weapons is the hallmark of of a great power. The first in Europe to realize this was De Gaulle. Now Kravchuk and Nazarbayev have started to realize this. But that is not enough for superpower status. It requires a nuclear advantage. Washington will never accept, for example, the Russian president's proposals concerning sea-based missiles, because it has significant superiority there. Bush would not say that publicly, of course. In diplomatic language the rejection would go something like: The United States will keep a "reasonable sufficiency" of these missiles, ensuring the "requisite balance."

But, one might say, the classic example is the attitude toward the SDI program. One of Yeltsin's "surprises" was his declared willingness to embark on the joint development of a space defense system with the United States to replace the strategic defense initiative program. Moscow's proposal sounds very logical. Remember that even Reagan promised sincerely to share with us the successes in the creation of a "space shield." And that was in conditions of confrontation. Now that Russia and America are becoming partners this collaboration could be a very important element in the formation of the new world order.

However, scarcely anyone today takes Reagan's promises seriously, as one might expect. The idea of a new world order, based on cooperation between the two superpowers, is also undergoung a metamorphosis. Today U.S. security is based not on a nuclear balance, but on control of the nuclear forces of a Soviet Union which is disintegrating in an untidy manner. The danger stems not from our strength, but from our weakness. I am sure it is a only matter of time before the United States pulls out of the ABM treaty. That will happen as soon as it is ready to deploy SDI elements in space. But the motives are already in place: Protection against uncontrolled use of nuclear weapons from the territory of the former USSR.

That is why the U.S. Administration intends to top up budget appropriations for SDI in fiscal 1993 by at least $1 billion, to bring the total sum to more than $5 billion. That is on top of the $1 billion increase in expenditure on SDI that was obtained last year as a result of the Patriot missile's successful actions.

I wonder how Russian diplomats and the leaders of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] will take all this. Of course, it is pointless to get involved in a space arms race, indeed we are not up to it. But there are political means, after all. Or are we going to remain silent and dance to the tune of the "elder brother," of the new "center," now shifted to Washington?

We could learn a lot from the SDI affair: Note that the United States really is cutting its military expenditure sharply. Above all, this is expenditure on the expensive upkeep of servicemen. But military production is being curtailed too. In other words, they are carrying out conversion, as we are. However, in their case it does not lead to the destruction of the production and scientific potential, to a brain drain, involving people who are valuable to the nation. They are not being forced to switch to designing pressure cookers or refrigerators.

The fact that a foundation is being set up in the United States to recruit our nuclear scientists is highly indicative. There is not only the fear that they will go and work for, say, Iran or Libya, but a direct interest in their "brains," which will attract the very highest salaries. The SDI program also involves the creation of high technology programs for the 21st century and the preservation of an advanced and powerful production potential. And that is costly. But when a superpower needs a "victory," it will not balk at the price.

Aginst this background our wholesale conversion program—"seven-year plan in three years"—gives rise to many questions. Will it not cost us more than a sensible switch to less complex and progressive production? But, clearly, it is our destiny—"to catch and overtake America." This time we will overtake it in terms of disarmament, but what will that do for us?

As you can see, there are more questions than answers. Some of them will be clarified in the course of the president's trip. For example—how to survive when thousands of nuclear missiles in the CIS and the United States are aimed at one another.

The president left the main question at home: How to survive when these missiles are no more?

Decisive Rejection To Join Process

PM0502134792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 5

[Report by Aleksandr Sychev: "The Nuclear Forces of Britain, France, and China Remain Inviolable"]

[Text] Britain, France, and China, members of the so-called "nuclear club," while welcoming the plans of the United States and Russia to radically reduce their nuclear arsenals, have nevertheless decisively rejected Russian President Boris Yeltsin's call to join in the disarmament process.

In principle, no other answer should have been expected. The stance of these three nuclear powers is well known, and its main features have undergone no substantial changes since the first nuclear systems entered into service. In response to Russia's call, spokesmen of these countries justified their objections in absolutely identical fashion, as if they had held preliminary consultations. The size of our arsenals cannot even be compared with those possessed by the United States and Russia and, consequently, our participation is premature, they declared.

According to available data, with the creation [sozdaniye] of the fourth "Trident" nuclear submarine, Britain will have approximately 130 sea-launched multicharge [mnogozaryadnyy] ballistic missiles in service. Intermediate-range missiles on 14 launchers and about 400 airplanes capable of carrying nuclear bombs should be added to this. "This is an insignificant fraction, approximately one-fifteenth of the U.S. and Russian arsenals," British Prime Minister J. Major declared.

France has at its disposal 18 intermediate-range missiles, 40 tactical missile launchers, 96 ballistic missiles stationed on six submarines, and more than 200 airplanes capable of delivering nuclear bombs to their target.

Little is known of the Chinese arsenal. This sphere is closed to outside eyes by an impenetrable curtain of secrecy. However, the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies estimates China's nuclear forces as follows: Eight ballistic missiles with one warhead each (stationed on one "Xia" class submarine), and 60 intermediate-range missiles.

In his message to UN Secretary General B. Ghali, which outlines the main avenues of Russia's policy in the sphere of arms reduction and disarmament, B. Yeltsin points out in particular that China, Britain, and France should not remain on the sidelines and uncontrollably build up their offensive nuclear arsenals which could, in our president's opinion, destabilize the international situation in the future.

Of course, such a threat cannot be entirely ruled out. There is full justification for assuming, in view of these states' expressed intention to continue to improve and build up their arsenals, that they will ultimately have to resolve the problem. But it is also indisputable that both Russia and the United States, even with the proposed scale of disarmament, will possess for a long time to come forces adequate for maintaining stability.

I think that the Russian leadership harbored no illusions in appealing to the governments of these three nuclear powers. The aim was different—to give a signal that the current proposals from Washington and Moscow are viewed only as only the next phase. China, France, and Britain must perceive this long-term perspective and begin mentally preparing themselves today for the need to join in this process. By the way of a first step, in some experts' opinion, they could pledge not to exceed the fixed quantitative and possibly qualitative level of arms which might be agreed in the course of talks.

If it was indeed this goal that the Russian Government set itself in addressing London, Paris, and Beijing, then it should be admitted that it has achieved it. President F. Mitterrand, on an official visit to Oman, declared: "France will take part in discussions on disarmament problems with great pleasure as soon as the U.S. and Russian nuclear potentials are comparable with the French." China will, of course, take part in the process when the remaining members of the "club" halt the testing, production, and deployment of their nuclear weapons, Chinese Foiregn Ministry spokesman Duan Jin declared. Only Britain has kept silent, promising, however, to put pressure on its "G-7" partners on the issue of setting up a ruble stabilization fund.

Seen as Imperiling Deterrence

PM0602111592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 3

[Article by Professor Dr. of Technical Sciences Lieutenant General Ye. Volkov, retired; "Strategic Offensive Arms Reduction Is Both Necessary and Possible, But... While Observing Certain Conditions"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] B. Yeltsin's statement and G. Bush's message to Congress have posed in a new way many key questions in the sphere of limiting and reducing arms. Although, in principle, the proposals of both Russia and the United States have been set forth quite clearly, their practical realization will undoubtedly give rise to serious problems. Hero of Socialist Labor Ye. Volkov, military scientist, discusses some of them in his article.

The recent initiatives of the Russian and U.S. presidents have once again drawn public attention to strategic offensive arms—the most powerful and complex type of modern weapons. The use of strategic offensive arms in a military conflict would threaten every living thing on earth. Therefore the desire to reduce and maybe even eliminate them altogether is perfectly valid and understandable. However, there is also another side to the coin. While any threat whatever of military conflicts in the future remains, all changes in armed forces, including reductions in their armaments, must be carefully assessed and weighed.

Modern strategic offensive arms embrace three components: ground-launched ICBM's, submarine-launched ballistic missiles [SLBM's], and heavy bombers. Both the missiles and the bombers can carry several nuclear charges each. The table cites data characterizing the strategic offensive arms of both sides as of the time the

Soviet-U.S. Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms was signed in 1991:

	ICBM's		SLBM's	
	Number of Missiles	Number of Warheads	Number of Missiles	Number of Warheads
USSR	1,398	6,612	940	2,804
United States	1,000	2,450	672	5,760
	Heavy Bombers		Total	
	Number of Aircraft	Number of Charges	Number of Carriers	Number of Charges
USSR	162	855	2,500	10,271
United States	574	2,353	2,246	10,563

According to generally accepted views, strategic offensive arms are not a means of waging war but one of the most important means of preventing it. To prevent war from being unleashed against some state, that state must be able to inflict unacceptable damage on an aggressor—in other words, the armed forces of a given state must be capable of resolving the task of deterrence in a guaranteed manner under any conditions. For obvious reasons (peculiarities of location, existence of allies, possession of military bases, etc.) the potentials of the Armed Forces of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] and the United States, for example, for resolving the task of deterrence are far from identical. Whereas the United States can inflict substantial damage on the Commonwealth states with the help of nonnuclear means, strategic offensive arms are the only possible means of influence for us. I wish at once to make a proviso. Both we and the United States are ceasing to consider each other probable enemies. But as long as the strategic offensive arms of both sides remain targeted on Russian and U.S. installations respectively, it seems to me that further arguments are not only of a theoretical nature.

In accordance with our well known pledge not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, the only way to utilize strategic offensive arms is to use them in retaliatory operations. This is why, in the event of war being unleashed, the destruction of our strategic offensive arms will be the enemy's most important task.

In general, action against strategic offensive arms in the course of combat operations can include the use of conventional means during the nonnuclear period of a war, the use of nuclear means at the stage of nuclear war, and the mobilization of ABM systems. Varying assessments are made of the number of charges needed to resolve the task of deterrence. Most frequently, however, it is measured in hundreds of charges. This is considerably fewer than exist, as we have seen. It follows from this that most of them (of the order of 90 percent) are not needed at all to fulfill a combat task and might be needed only to compensate for possible losses in the event of an attack. Hence the possibility in principle of very deep reductions in strategic offensive arms, but only if an obligatory condition is observed—a simultaneous reduction in their possible losses. In this connection decisive significance attaches to the question of what the losses depend on and how they can be reduced.

Losses of strategic offensive arms in a conventional war will mainly be determined by the operation of high-accuracy aircraft weapons. As the war in the Persian Gulf showed, arms of this type have attained a very high level in the United States and other NATO countries and are continuing to be improved. Consequently, losses of strategic offensive arms can be substantial even during a nonnuclear period of war.

In a nuclear war possible losses of strategic offensive arms are determined mainly by the characteristics of the other side's ballistic missiles. The fact that high accuracy MX ICBM's and Trident II SLBM's with powerful combat equipment have entered the arsenal and been introduced into the grouping of strategic weapons has sharply enhanced its potential. Even after their reduction, as envisaged by the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms, and the implementation of G. Bush's latest initiatives U.S. ballistic missiles will be able to hit a considerable number of highly hardened targets by the year 2000. It also should not be forgotten that, whereas the French and British strategic missiles do not at present pose any special threat to our strategic offensive arms because of their relatively low numbers and poor characteristics, such a threat could emerge in the future, after modernization.

Thus we should conclude that the development of arms systems in the United States and other NATO countries is still objectively aimed at increasing losses of our strategic offensive arms in the event of a military conflict.

But what of the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms, concluded in 1991? Does it not, probably, improve the situation in a sphere of interest to us? The treaty provides for a reduction in the number of charges on each side's strategic offensive arms to 6,000 units. This is considerably more than is required to fulfill the task of deterrence, and so the treaty would in no way hinder its fulfillment if... if, when it was concluded, care had been taken to ensure that possible losses of strategic offensive arms had been reduced accordingly. However, this was not done.

The treaty is not associated at all with a reduction in conventional arms, and so everything that was said about losses of strategic offensive arms during the nonnuclear period of a war remains in force. Moreover, if conventional arms are not reduced in conformity with the reduction in strategic offensive arms, losses from them will even increase.

Let us add to this that some of the treaty's provisions are aimed at lowering the combat potential of our strategic offensive arms. An example of this is provided by the fact that a ceiling has been set on the number of warheads on ICBM's and SLBM's at 4,900 units, or approximately 82 percent of their total number. In 1991 this percentage stood at more than 91 percent for our strategic offensive arms. Thus, the proportion of ballistic missiles, which are precisely the main weapons of deterrence, in our country's strategic offensive arms must be reduced appreciably. G. Bush's new proposals change nothing here. Moreover, their implementation is made dependent on the CIS' abandonment of MIRVed ICBM's, which are one of the main components of our strategic offensive arms.

As regards possible losses of charges on ABM systems, things are still worse here. Those people who prepared the treaty evidently understood the catastrophic consequences for our strategic offensive arms that will result from the creation of ABM systems in the United States. Therefore repeated mention was made at the initial stages of the need to stop work on ABM defense in the United States—which, in particular, is prohibited by the 1972 treaty. However, in 1989 the USSR foreign minister, who was in charge of concluding the treaty, declared that we were ready to sign and ratify the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms even if an accord was not reached on ABM problems. True, it was added that, if one of the sides created ABM systems, the other could pull out of the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms. However, nothing was said about the fact that after its realization it would be too late to "pull out" of it. There would be insufficient funds and time to reinstate what had been destroyed. Let us note that, in addition, a reduction in our strategic offensive arms makes it easier for the United States to create ABM systems because, the smaller the number of attacking missiles or their warheads, the easier it is to intercept them.

So what conclusions do we reach? The danger exists that strategic offensive arms will lose their deterrent ability—the ability to resolve the very important task of ensuring the state's defense capability. It is possible to take varying attitudes to this. If you reckon that, after our people were able to defend themselves for many centuries, they have no need of this now, then the question is decided with the utmost simplicity—it is possible not to be concerned about the fate of strategic offensive arms, for they can be not only reduced but also eliminated altogether, even unilaterally. But if this approach is unacceptable, ways should be sought to resolve the problem.

Such ways do exist. They certainly do not consist in abandoning the reduction of strategic offensive arms—may my possible opponents not accuse me of militarist propensities. Reductions of strategic offensive arms—even far deeper ones than are being made now—can and must be carried out. However, they must not—and this is possible—result in strategic offensive arms' losing their ability to defend the country. A number of measures can be proposed for this—both military-technical and political (diplomatic) measures. The former include the development and improvement of strategic offensive arms themselves in areas that ensure their survivability under conditions of enemy action. Measures in the second group include reaching accords with the United States and other NATO countries on unconditionally stopping all work on the creation of ABM systems; limiting and reducing all other types of arms in addition to strategic offensive arms; prohibiting actions against strategic offensive arms in the event of a nonnuclear military conflict.

'Disquieting Elements' Viewed

PM0602112192 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 3

["Specialist's Commentary" by Colonel D. Belskiy: "Is Security Ensured?"]

[Text] The Russian Federation increasingly sees its place as being in the existing system of collective security of the world's developed states. Evidence of this is provided by Russian President B.N. Yeltsin's latest initiative—his statement "On Russia's Policy in the Sphere of Arms Limitation and Reduction."

The initiative takes account of virtually all aspects connected with the former USSR's nuclear weapons and international commitments to reduce and eliminate them. After all, in the current situation it would have been impossible to ignore the West's concern over the future of the former USSR's nuclear potential.

Is this concern justified? Unfortunately, statements by CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] politicians sometimes provoke fears that their intentions could be changing. There was a certain vagueness displayed by Kazakhstan regarding the nuclear weapons deployed on its territory. There are quite a few people in the Ukraine who advocate retaining some form or other of nuclear potential to spite Russia. In the conditions of political instability, suspicions have even appeared: Would the nuclear button remain for long in one and the same hand?

Another factor provoking fears in the West is the threat of the "unsanctioned use of nuclear weapons," whereby such weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists, "mad colonels," or one of the sides involved in civil war. Concerning this problem, we should turn to the provision in the Russian president's statement which emphasizes the Russian leadership's commitment to ensuring the maximum security of nuclear weapons and all the facilities connected with the development [razrabotka], production, and use of such weapons.

Of course, one would like to believe that our military specialists have analyzed the new initiative with sufficient thoroughness to ensure the security both of CIS states and of Russia. However, the present steps in the sphere of disarmament are being taken in new conditions. Conditions which conceal a certain unpredicability in the sphere of security. For example, anxiety is caused by the fact that technical questions of eliminating nuclear arsenals will be resolved after the adoption of political decisions during the forthcoming talks. Will complications not arise at the talks and will concessions not have to be made which might contradict the proclaimed goals of our security?

There are other disquieting elements in the Russian disarmament program. This is primarily the proposal about joint development [razrabotka], and then creation [sozdaniye] and joint operation of a global system of defense from missile attack instead of SDI. It virtually coincided with a spate of successes in the creation [sozdaniye] of SDI systems. Will such a proposal be accepted in Washington? Will they share with us the results they have achieved already in their work in this sphere? About $4.15 billion has been allocated in the Pentagon's budget for this year for the development [razrabotka] of strategic defense—significantly more than last year. Next year the U.S. military department expects to receive more than $5 billion.

It is possible to single out in particular the declared readiness to eliminate existing antisatellite systems and the desire to elaborate an accord on a total ban of weapons especially built to destroy satellites. This is a chronic problem. It is connected with the development [razrabotka], openly declared by the United States, of the ASAT antisatellite system. Again it is not clear how far our initiative corresponds to all aspects of security.

The steps which Russia intends to take in accordance with the program of nuclear and conventional arms reductions announced by President B. Yeltsin is being perceived worldwide as an important step toward strategic stability. However, skeptics and pessimists are justifiably asking the question: Following the implementation of all the proposals that have been put forward, will Russia be able to ensure for itself, and for the CIS states, a global or even a regional military-strategic role in the world that is of any real significance? After all, despite the lowering of the level of military confrontation between the former USSR and the countries of the West, and the reduced probability of nuclear conflict, other dangers at regional level are not disappearing. The conflagration in Yugoslavia, the conflict in the Caucasus, the tense situation in the Near East...

Joint 'Early Warning System' Efforts Advocated

OW0502032392 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1917 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin of Russia has said in an IF [INTERFAX] interview that U.S. President George Bush called "enticing" his proposal to create a global space-based system to protect the world community. Andrey Kokoshin, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, has been one of the leading developers of a system that is aimed at reorienting the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) using high technologies offered by the Russian defense complex. He said in an exclusive IF [INTERFAX] interview he viewed Mr Yeltsin's initiative as opening up an opportunity for cooperation in the development of an anti-missile warning system.

In Kokoshin's view, this work should begin from an exchange of information with the view to setting up a joint information clearing house. He says the objective is hard to achieve given the fact that similar systems have been developed in the USSR and in the United States "following internal priorities". In addition, old secrets will have to be revealed. The next stage may involve a joint work on specific elements of the system, including satellites and radars. Mr Kokoshin does not venture to discern further stages of the project implementation.

Once Russia and the United States ceased to be potential enemies, a conceptual foundation for strategic stability may be said to have been changed. Today, security and reliability of nuclear weapons but measured in terms of having no opportunity to use them is a major factor contributing to stability. At this junction, we should work to prevent accidental and unauthorized launches. Only this way a reliable protection from potential enemies of the new world order may be ensured.

With respect to the cost of the global protection system, Kokoshin said joint efforts to develop an anti-missile warning system would be much cheaper than similar efforts taken independently by either country. The issue of strike warheads, a cording to Kokoshin, requires a thorough examination given huge expenses involved. For us this consideration is of soecial significance, he added.

Russia Not 'Poor Relative'

LD0602072292 Moscow TASS in English
1849 GMT 4 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS observer Nikolay Zheleznov]

[Text] Moscow February 4 (TASS)—The SDI, that once was feared by both Russians and Americans and took lots of scientific efforts, seems to soon acquire a form of the "global monitoring" peaceful international project, believes academician and vice-president of the Russian Academy of Sciences Yevgeniy Velikhov.

In his opinion, it might be one of the first results of the Russian president's recent initiative put forward during his official U.S. visit.

Velikhov, who was member of Yeltsin's expert group during the visit, explained the monitoring means a space system of observation and watching of everything that happens on Earth.

Naturally, all the unexpectednesses, in case they threaten the security of this or that region, are a signal to the international community to interfere in the situation, no matter it is a ripening ecological catastrophe or data on the concentration of chemical or nuclear arms. [sentence as received]

Asked "to what extent the Russian and U.S. potentials united in the project are of equal worth", Velikhov admitted the Russian space technology's elementary basis is, certainly, inferior to that of the United States.

As for scientific and technological ideas and even some technologies, Russia is not "a poor relative", the academician said.

Agreement on Nuclear Forces 'Reassuring'

PM0602114992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1910 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Report from the "Information Bulletin" program

[Text] If the Commonwealth develops successfully, it will remember the first month of the new year for a long time to come. Military problems have seriously exacerbated the situation in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. Only one thing is reassuring—the fact that its leaders have reached agreement on nuclear forces. It has been decided that they will be controlled by a unified command. With the formation of the CIS, the number of nuclear states has increased. Since the very birth of the Commonwealth, Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, and Belarus have taken a rather unclear stand on the issue of whether or not to have their own nuclear weapons. This prompted an immediate reaction in the West, which would naturally like nuclear weapons to remain in one pair of hands. Since the CIS has so far given rise to nothing but spontaneous conflicts, Western experts have started categorically talking about their preference for all nuclear weapons to be moved to Russia. Now Nursultan Nazarbayev has said that he values the international community's recognition more than entry into the nuclear club. The Ukraine is declaring its nonnuclear status, and the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from its territory is beginning. But worries still persist. The Army has found itself drawn into the presidential game of sovereignty. This has at times been so intense that it seems that everything we have previously achieved is on the point of collapse...

CFE Treaty Agenda Based on CIS Emergence

LD0602030592 Moscow TASS in English 1749 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Smelov]

[Text] Vienna February 5 (ITAR-TASS)—The agenda of a meeting of the Joint Consultative Group (JCG) on the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE)—the main instrument for the enactment of the treaty—dealt with questions of how to bring the CFE treaty into force most quickly and effectively and adapt it to new political realities taking shape in Europe following the emergence of a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The JCG members positively evaluate the fact that consultations are now being held within the CIS framework on the apportionment of responsibility for the observance of the CFE treaty provisions in the form in which they were stipulated for the Soviet Union.

The very subject of consultations belongs exclusively to the competence of the respective CIS member-states. However, the informing of the other parties to the CFE treaty on the state of affairs during the consultations by using the channel of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council is viewed as a political goodwill gesture which is meant to build confidence still further.

As far as Russia is concerned, she takes the necessary steps towards bringing the CFE treaty into force, Vyacheslav Kulebyakin, leader of the Russian Federation delegation to the JCG told ITAR- TASS. Preparations for the ratification of the treaty are in full progress in the Russian parliament, he added.

Russia intends to steer matters towards the observance of all Soviet obligations under the CFE treaty, Kulebyakin said. This applies to both the Russian Federation's direct responsibility for the obligations that will be assigned to it by internal accords within the CIS and to a general vision of the most optimum ways to resolve the CFE problems arising in view of the forthcoming accession of new states to it, he added.

Defense Workers Convicted of Stealing Platinum

LD0602093892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0700 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The trial of a group of workers from a top secret defense facility of the Mayak production association has ended in Chelyabinsk. They were accused of stealing and attempting to sell radioactive platinum. It was revealed during the investigation that this metal could cause the slow death of people who acquired it. The court sentenced the thieves to various terms of imprisonment.

Commonwealth

Upcoming Meeting of Heads of Government Viewed

Agenda Revealed

LD0502211592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1453 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By BELTA correspondent Vladimir Glod]

[Text] Minsk, 5 Feb (TASS)—Nine questions are to be discussed during the forthcoming meeting of the heads of governments of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] member states, to take place in Moscow on Saturday, 8 February. They are: —Material supplies and financing of the CIS Armed Forces in the first quarter of 1992;

—Centralized import purchases of foodstuffs and agricultural raw materials, use of foreign credits for materials, and means for the protection of plants;
—Regulations for economic relations between states with regard to output supplies;
—A differentiated approach to the profitability level (within a 50 percent margin);
—Coordination of interstate relations in the area of the electric power industry of CIS member states;
—An interstate agreement on ecological problems requiring urgent coordinated action;
—Organization of the work of a weather forecast bureau in the Commonwealth;
—Financing the expenses that arise from having a working group;
—Status of the joint stock society "Avtoselkhozmashkholding."

This recommendation was adopted at a session of the working group for technically organizing, preparing for, and conducting sessions of the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Heads of Government of the Commonwealth, which was held in Minsk today. As Ivan Korotchenya, the group's coordinator, explained to a BELTA correspondent, attention was drawn first and foremost to the topical nature of the problems and stages in the elaboration of the corresponding documents. The final word in the shaping of the agenda for 8 February remains with the heads of government of the sovereign states.

According to Ivan Korotchenya, the session succeeded in quickly finding a mutual understanding. For reasons that were not clear, the representatives of Azerbaijan and the Ukraine did not arrive for the session.

The next session of the working group is planned for 11 February. On that occasion a package of military problems, which the heads of the member states of the Commonwealth propose to discuss at the 14 February meeting in Minsk, will be at the center of attention.

To Focus on Armed Forces

OW0602113692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1054 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Prime ministers from the Commonwealth of Independent States are to meet in Moscow on Saturday [8 February]. According to IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent, they'll focus on the ways to ensure supplies and financing for the Commonwealth's Armed Forces in the 1st quarter of this year.

They'll also discuss the centralized imports of foods and agricultural raw materials at the expense of foreign credits; commodity exchanges between each other; governments' aid to environmental protection; and other issues. giving aid to it. According to A. Ulyukaev, 5 to 6 billion dollars are needed to form a stabilization fund which would make it possible to turn the ruble into convertible currency domestically. One of the leading advisers to the Gaydar team said with reference to his western colleagues that the IMF approved the order of steps taken by Russia's government during transition to free market, when it liberalized prices first, and then began privatization. (This interview is presented in full in today's edition of our "Presidential Bulletin").

Customs Experts To Continue Work on Policy

OW0602005092 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1908 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Experts of CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] customs services plan to meet in Moscow on February 8 to continue work on a governmental agreement on customs policy. All CIS members, Georgia and the Baltics have been invited.

Last week heads of the CIS customs services spoke in the course of a consultation in favor of a customs agreement and a customs union, including: —commitment of CIS states not to introduce import/export dues;

—a common customs tariff in trade with third countries;

—the creation of a customs council and coordinating group on customs rules and tariffs and to have common customs statistics.

A protocol of the meeting was signed by Russia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Tajikistan (chiefs of customs services empowered to sign the document). Armenia, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan did not participate but supported the idea of a single customs policy.

Baltics

Experts To Meet To Start Drafting Treaty

OW0502164792 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1414 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Groups of experts from the chief command of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces and the Baltic states will meet February 10 to start drafting a treaty between Russia, on the one hand, and Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, on the other, on the legal status and schedule of the withdrawal of troops of the former USSR, chief command of the CIS Armed Forces has told BALTFAX.

The chief command of the CIS Armed Forces is going to confirm officially the strength and sites where troops are deployed on the territory of the Baltic states by the time the agreements are to be signed. The command of the Armed Forces of the former USSR will coordinate plans for exercises and redeployments with the Baltic authorities and pledge not to interfere in their internal affairs and to observe the laws of the host country.

The CIS military command says that the future of movable and fixed assets of the armed forces of the dissolved USSR is going to be one of the most serious controversies. Military experts believe that the Baltic states cannot demand disinterested hand-over of that property, because it has been built with efforts by many republics of the former USSR. Under international law, that property is should be distributed proportionately.

Experts believe that Russia and the Baltic countries could include in the draft agreement the pledge to give servicemen and their families social, economic and political guarantees and freedoms. For instance the Baltic states could undertake to count the time of Army service on their territory as part of the residence qualification necessary to apply for the host country's citizenship and to pay servicemen certain sums in local currency.

Kapitanets Expounds on Troop Withdrawal

PM0502165592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 3

[Report by Colonel M. Ziyeminsh, Captain First Rank A. Pilipchuk, and Captain Second Rank V. Urban: "Troop Withdrawal: Now from Baltic Countries"]

[Excerpts] A Russian state delegation headed by Sergey Shakhray, deputy chairman of the government and state counselor for legal policy, visited Vilnius, Riga, and Tallinn 31 January through 2 February. [passage omitted]

Admiral of the Fleet Ivan Kapitanets, first deputy commander of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Navy, who participated in the meetings, told KRASNAYA ZVEZDA's correspondent:

"In its work the Russian Federation delegation proceeded, above all, from the premise that the troops of the Northwest Group of Forces (the former Baltic Military District) and the forces of the Baltic Fleet stationed on the territory of the Baltic states have been placed under Russia's jurisdiction. In this connection the Russian delegation took a firm stand on the rights proclaimed by the Baltic states to ownership of the Army and Navy in that region. The Russian delegation is prepared to examine property claims against the military only for the period prior to 1940. The Russian Government delegation examined questions of the withdrawal of the group's troops and the Fleet's forces from the Baltic states' territory in the context of creating conditions for their relocation. This will be carried out as the troops are provided with conditions for amenities at the new place, for the construction of housing and sociocultural and domestic projects, and for the resolution of problems of servicemen's social protection. The question of supplying food and consumer goods to the servicemen temporarily stationed on the territory of sovereign states was touched upon during the talks." [passage omitted]

Military

Chernavin Remarks on Loyalty Oath, Fleet Issue

LD0502225292 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] After the demand by the Ukrainian parliament that Admiral Kasatonov, commander of the Black Sea Fleet, resign, a conflict again arose. Today, a news conference was held in Moscow by Admiral Chernavin, commander in chief of the Navy. For the first time, both foreign and our own journalists were invited.

[Begin Chernavin recording] Overall the question is: How many times must someone swear an oath? On the whole that's how it is. Maybe once, maybe five times, and maybe eternally; who is the dearest, who gives the bigger bribe, who will show him a ruble, or who makes the bigger promises. What value is there in swearing an oath five times, or swearing an oath once? [end recording]

Only 6 percent of the Black Sea Fleet do not want to swear an oath to anybody. Ninety percent of young officers have sworn to the Commonwealth of Independent States. These figures were among the answers given.

Admiral Chernavin read an appeal by the Ukrainian defense minister, Morozov, and summed up: It's absurd. We are interested in the unity of the Fleet and are responsible for the fighting efficiency and personnel. Therefore we do not allow many agitators and propagandists among the servicemen of the Black Sea Fleet. This is an order, and there is no reason to take offence.

Replying to a question on Kravchuk's demand that Kasatonov be removed from his position, the commander noted that Kravchuk is most likely incorrectly informed by his aides. As regards the issue of the January initiatives on disarmanent in Russia and the United States as put forward by Yeltsin and Bush, Admiral Chernavin stressed that such steps are not only competent, but correct.

Kasatonov Describes Claim as 'Illegitimate'

LD0602052192 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1910 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] The Ukrainian president, Leonid Kravchuk, demanded the sacking of the commander of the Black Sea Fleet on charges of impeding Kiev's defense policy and specifically of barring Fleet servicemen from taking an oath of loyalty to Ukraine. Admiral Kasatonov believes the future of the Fleet should be decided first by Commonwealth leaders.

Meanwhile, out of all forces deployed on Ukrainian soil, it is the Fleet which appears to be pledging allegiance to all Commonwealth states without exception.

While paying respect to Ukraine's sovereign right do you have its own armed forces. [sentence as heard] The chief of the Navy staff offered his help in creating a Ukrainian navy by sharing part of the Black Sea Fleet, which comes to a total of 39 warships and units, together with the advance infrastructure of bases, logistics and communications in the western Black Sea. However, the admiral described as illegitimate the Ukrainian leadership's claim for the whole of the Fleet. Historically, he said, Russia and its people were engaged in a total of eight expeditions and three wars to get access to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean over a span of three hundred years. He put the toll of lives at an estimate five million, most of them Russians. The admiral said members of the many ethnic groups had defended the Fleet's main base Sevastapol in World War II, putting the number of nationalities whose members were now manning the Fleet at 46.

Economically, said the admiral, Ukraine can neither afford the upkeep of the whole of the Fleet, nor build new warships because all except hulls was manufactured by more than two and a half thousand plants right across the Commonwealth. He said equipment and manpower were far more important than the hulls built at the Nikolayev shipyards.

By way of argument, Admiral Kasatonov also pointed to personnel training, saying the Fleet was training about two thousand specialists for other fleets, which also trained people needed by the Black Sea Fleet. He said the Ukrainian fleet would not be able to do any of these jobs on its own. The commander of the Black Sea Fleet said he would not allow the break up of the Soviet Union to be followed by that of his Fleet.

Moscow District To Receive 'Around 100' Units

LD0402052592 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2330 GMT 31 Jan 92

[Text] In 1992, the Moscow Military District will receive around 100 military units withdrawn from the Western and Northern Group of Forces, including those which should have been deployed on the territory of other republics of the Union. They include around 20,000 servicemen, with over 13,000 families. Anatoliy Golavnyuk, first deputy commander of the district troops, thinks the main prerequisite for the successful deployment of these arrivals is the existence of a specific social program and mutual understanding between the military administration and local executive bodies. Authorities in Nizhnyy and Voronezh Oblasts have expressed their readiness to cooperate with the program and to offer land and resources for the deployment of troops.

Civil Use of Space Communications Advocated

PM0602093092 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 7

[Report by Nikolay Burbyga: "Space Communications Stand Idle While Conventional Channels of Communication Are Overburdened"]

[Text] About 10 communications satellites, capable of effecting all kinds of communications with any point on the planet, are currently constantly in operation, in geostationary and elliptical orbits, in the interests of the Armed Forces. However, the military make continuous use of not more than 30 percent of the channels, out of an available total of 1,500 telephone channels and about 1,000 telegraph channels.

The remaining 70 percent, as reserve Colonel Yuriy Pigasov, former satellite communications center commander, said on a visit to the editorial office, are idle. Even during periods of military exercises, Pigasov explains, the technical potential of the satellite communications system is only 60 percent utilized. But there are never more than 60 such days in a year, and in the light of the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact the number has fallen considerably.

What is to be done with the "superfluous" military communications channels? In Pigasov's opinion it is expedient to lease them to the Ministry of Communications, which could use them to meet the needs of the population and enterprises throughout Commonwealth territory, and if necessary outside it.

"Experts have calculated," Pigasov explains, "that it is economically advantageous to effect telephone and telegraph communications via satellites. At existing rates, the cost of the use of a single telephone channel for one minute over a distance of between 600 and 3,000 km is one ruble [R]. The minimum charge for transmitting one word in a telegram is 20 kopeks, the maximum—60 kopeks. So revenue from the use of telephone and telegraph channels could amount to more than R2 billion. In view of the ever increasing demand for telexes and faxes on the part of joint enterprises, associations, concerns, and various kinds of commodity exchanges and commercial organizations, the income could be increased many times over."

[Burbyga] How could satellite communications channels to connected to oblast, city, and rayon communications networks in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]?

[Pigasov] It is not difficult technically. In Moscow and Smolensk Oblasts there are two major permanent Armed Forces satellite communications centers which, using terrestrial communications facilities belonging to the Ministry of Communications, connect the communications channel to military facilities in Moscow and the oblast. By means of very simple switching operations, satellite communications channels are simply switched over to meet the population's needs. As for peripheral oblasts and cities, there military satellite communications stations installed on all-terrain vehicles could be used. The troops have hundreds of these stations.

[Burbyga] But as I understand it the military could reasonably object that as a result of such redesignation, combat readiness will suffer...

[Pigasov] It will not suffer, since those categories of troops and branches of the Armed Forces that are on permanent alert status would remain inviolate. Only facilities that are currently idle would be used for "peaceful purposes."

Economic & Social

Oil Industry Leaders Intend To Create Union

OW0602043692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1853 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] 250 leaders of the oil industry from ten countries in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States], who have gathered for a meeting in the city of Tyumen (Western Siberia), intend to create a union of oil producers, a free association of enterprises involved in drilling, transport, refining and marketing oil and oil products. The union, according to the organizers of the meeting—the Tyumen regional administration and the oil drilling association "Tyumenneftegas, will help to preserve former ties within the oil industry which have been threatened due to the break up of the USSR.

Official representatives from the "Rosneftegas" corporation are not taking part in the meeting. "Rosneftegas" unites the majority of Russian oil and gas enterprises. Many of the meeting's participants mentioned in an interview with "INTERFAX" that the formation of a Union of oil producers is in the interests of oil producers in the Tyumen region and of the largest oil drilling associations in Western Siberia, who are planning to be the leaders of the Union.

*** The Russian Government intends to increase from 20 to 35%, the amount of all Tyumen region oil which drilling enterprises there may sell at uncontrolled prices. Yuriy Shafrannik, the head of the Tyumen regional administration, informed an "INTERFAX" correspondent of this. In this case, about 25 mn [million] tons [as received] of oil could be sold freely by the end of the year and the regional administration may receive revenues which will be used towards the socioeconomic development of the region.

According to Mr.Shafrannik, oil drilling enterprises in the Tyumen region in the past three years did not drill about 100 mn tons of oil due to the lack of state financing for oil drilling. Losses in 1992 due to this reason may be as high as 60-80 mn tons.

Oil Association To Maintain Pipeline Network

OW0602044092 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1853 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Soviet Business Report"]

[Text] In 1991, the inter-state association "Transneft" was established in order to manage the transportation of the former Soviet Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry's oil and oil products. National companies which transported oil to all of the former republics of the USSR founded the association. Their representatives passed a decision to preserve a united system of pipeline transport and to conduct complimentary policies of control, distribution and material-technical services to oil transporting branches.

TOWARDS THE END OF 1991 THE TOTAL LENGTH OF OIL PIPELINES IN THE FORMER USSR WAS 69,000 KM. In 1991, 536.4 mn [million] tons [as received] of oil were pumped through pipelines. The average volume of oil and oil products transported was more than 12 mn barrels per day. The 46 oil and gas extracting associations on the territory of the former USSR delivered oil through the system of main pipelines to 54 oil refining combines.

Length of main oil and product pipelines in the former USSR at the end of 1991.

Russia—49666 km
Kazakhstan—7050 km
Ukraine—3460 km
Belarus—2981 km
Azerbaijan—907 km
Turkmenistan—579 km
Uzbekistan—569 km
Georgia—477 km
Latvia—420 km
Lithuania—335 km
Kyrgyzstan—32 km
TOTAL—66476 km

National companies in the sovereign republics have retained the right to be in charge of the system of main pipelines and product lines on their territories. At the same time representatives of the national companies emphasize that separately they are unable to guarantee oil delivery dates and the reliability of main pipelines. Only through the preservation of a united system of repairs and technical service for the pipelines are they able to guarantee the norm previously held by the Soviet oil transporting system of 0.4% accidents for every 1000 km of pipeline per year. This was considered on the lowest accident rates in the world. Practically speaking, this meant that not more than 18-20 accidents rated serious or average took place per year.

ASSOCIATION INTENDS TO BECOME A HOLDING COMPANY. "Transneft" has prepared a project to make regional and main pipelines into joint-stock companies, in conjunction with which earlier investments will be registered as credit for future shareholders. The association is planning with the passage of time to become a gigantic holding company, uniting joint-stock companies and joint ventures in pipeline exploitation.

"Transneft's" project considers two principle ways to transform pipelines:

—regional systems would be transferred to the property of oil drilling and oil refining enterprises, which would become shareholders in regional pipeline companies. or instance Surgut-Polotsk from Western Siberia to Belorussia or Kuibyshev-Lisichansk from the Volga region to Ukraine, could be transferred to joint ownership of regional associations, including oil drilling joint ventures.

It is surmised that for the exploitation of especially important main oil pipelines either joint-stock companies, whose members could be foreign firms, or joint ventures with foreign participation could be created.

Some opportunities in a joint-stock company with foreign capital investment could be found in the oil pipelines Tenghiz-Gurev-Groznyy-Novorossiysk or Kuibyshev-Tikhoretskaya, and also oil terminals on the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea.

Opinion Center Poll Measures Expectations

OW0602073592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0509 GMT 6 Feb 92

[From "Viewpoint"]

[Text] According to the DATA news agency, on January 11-21, 1992, the National Public Opinion Studies Center polled 1597 respondents in Russia, 517 in Ukraine and 240 in Kazakhstan asking them what they expect to happen in political and economic spheres in February.

Expect the political situation to improve:
- in Kazakhstan—50%
- in Ukraine—28%
- in Russia—19%

Expect the political situation to worsen:
- in Russia—62%
- in Ukraine—51%
- in Kazakhstan—45%

Believe the economic situation will get better:
- in Kazakhstan—27%
- in Ukraine—18%
- in Russia—15%

Think the economic situation will worsen:
- in Russia—73%
- in Ukraine—73%
- in Kazakhstan—65%.

Agricultural Affairs

Mid-Jan Weather, Crop Conditions Reported

924A0497A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 24 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by N. Mikheyev: "Weather and Crops"]

[Text] The snow cover was not thick on fields with winter grain crops in most of the territory of Ukraine, Belarus, in the west of the Baltic area, in the south of the Volga region, and in the North Caucasus region; its height came, for the most part, to between one and four centimeters. However, there was no severe frost there. The wintering of winter crops for the most part proceeded favorably.

A high (30 centimeters, and in a number of regions, 50 centimeters) snow cover remained on the fields with winter grain crops in most of the territory of the Northern region, in the northeast of the central region, in the north of the Volga-Vyatka and Ural regions, and in places in Bashkiria. The freezing of the soil was not great in these areas. Despite severe frost registered in these regions (up to minus 30 degrees, and in places below minus 35 degrees), soil temperatures at the depth of the location of the tillering node of winter grain crops came for the most part to between minus one and minus three degrees.

In the rest of the European territory, winter grain crops were under the cover of snow, the height of which came for the most part to between 11 and 25 centimeters. Wintering proceeded in a satisfactory manner.

Due to frequent thaws and abrupt fluctuations of air temperatures, a crust of ice clinging to the soil which is, for the most part, less than 10 millimeters thick, is present on the fields with winter grains in the Northwestern, Central, Central-Chernozem, and Volga regions and in the south of the Volga-Vyatka region, as well as in a number of oblasts of Ukraine. The thickness of the ice crust came to between 13 and 30 millimeters on individual fields in Leningrad, Novgorod, Tula, Orel, Kursk, Volgograd, Chernigov, Sumy, and Kharkov oblasts, which is an unfavorable factor for the subsequent wintering of the winter crops.

Warm weather persisted in Siberia and in the northern oblasts of Kazakhstan for almost the entire 10 day period. Minimal temperatures at the depth of the location of the tillering node of winter crops continued to range between minus 5 and minus 10 degrees.

International Affairs

Yeltsin Arrives in Paris; Disarmament Discussed

PM0502183992 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 Morning Edition pp 1,4

[Report by Yuriy Kovalenko: "'Grand Debates' on Nuclear Arsenals Await Yeltsin in France"]

[Excerpts] Paris—On 5 February, Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin left for an official visit to France, his first visit to this country as Russian president.

Paris is attaching exceptional significance to Boris Yeltsin's visit. He will be received with all the dignity befitting the president of a country which has been close to France throughout its history. The main attention at the talks—at least this is the intention here on the Seine—will be focused on various aspects of the problem of nuclear weapons and European security.

"Russia is our privileged partner. That is why we want to begin a 'grand debate' with its president on nuclear disarmament on the Old Continent." This statement was made by Roland Dumas, French foreign minister, at a meeting with journalists organized by the Foreign Press Association.

Now for a few words on the program of the visit which, at our side's request, was raised to the level of a state visit, thereby assuming a special procedure and ceremony. Our president flies into Paris at 1800 hours Moscow time Wednesday and will spend at least two days in this city, which is bedecked with the identically colored Russian and French flags.

Boris Yeltsin will have talks with F. Mitterrand and other French leaders. He will visit Paris' City Hall, which is headed by a former opposition leader, Jacques Chirac, and will have a conversation with business circles. Finally, the program includes, for the first time, a meeting with Russian emigre representatives. I will also note that Naina Yeltsin is going to visit the famous Russian cemetery at Ste. Genevieve des Bois near Paris—also a first of its kind.

It is expected that a series of bilateral agreements will be signed: agreements on friendship and cooperation, nuclear security, cultural cooperation, the issue of visas, exchange of scientific and technical information, legal aid, and others. In short, France is ready to intensify its ties with Russia. [passage omitted]

Feelings here are different nowadays and in Paris the nuclear problem is regarded as the most acute, one which goes beyond the framework of bilateral relations. During a recent visit to Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan, as Roland Dumas reminded journalists, he saw for himself that nuclear security questions have still not been resolved in the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS].

The right to control the nuclear button while observing the principle of prior consultation has been entrusted to Boris Yeltsin, Dumas noted, but now, according to him, Kazakhstan wants to go further and if necessary prevent the use of nuclear weapons. Paris hopes that this problem will be settled at the meeting of CIS heads to be held 14 February.

During the talks with Boris Yeltsin the French side again plans to propose cooperation in the redeployment in Russia, dismantling, and destruction of the nuclear warheads presently on the territory of several republics of the former Soviet Union, which have neither the financial nor the technical resources for that.

The "grand debate" on nuclear disarmament in Europe which will begin during Yeltsin's visit, Dumas told journalists, is connected with the accord between F. Mitterrand and G. Bush reached at the recent UN Security Council session. They decided that the first stage would be a conference of the three nuclear powers possessing nuclear weapons in Europe—the United States, Britain, and France. Then at the next stage they will be joined by Russia which, they hope here, will subsequently begin to assemble the entire missile potential of the former Union on its territory. "During my conversation in Moscow," Dumas said, "I saw for myself Boris Yeltsin's determination to go as far as possible along the road of disarmament."

Paris has assessed in its own fashion the Russian president's latest initiative on the radical reduction of nuclear weapons. The foreign policy department head saw in this initiative Yeltsin's readiness to align with the French concept of "sufficiency." In other words, it is not necessary to possess a power capable of destroying our planet 35 times over, it is "sufficient" to have the ability to do this only once, Dumas noted.

Commenting on Yeltsin's proposal on the creation of a global system for the defense of the world community, Dumas noted that it differs from that offered by America's SDI. The "star wars" program, which envisaged the creation of a defensive shield, the minister recalled, was a stage in the superarms race in the context of the superpower confrontation. The Russian president's initiative, however, has been put forward in a completely different context—the context of partnership. It deserves close study. [passage omitted]

Focus on Support for Reform

LD0502222292 Moscow TASS in English 2145 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Lyudmila Aleksandrova, Sergey Batyrev, Yuriy Sizov, and Viktor Khrekov]

[Text] Paris February 6 ITAR-TASS—President Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation arrived in France on Wednesday [5 February] for a state official visit.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and French President Francois Mitterrand arrived by helicopter from Orly Airport to the Place des Invalides in the centre of Paris.

Both leaders decided to use a helicopter to save time for today's talks, expected to begin after their arrival via car and motorcycle escort at Elysee Palace, the French president's official residence.

When speaking at Orly Airport during a welcoming ceremony, Yeltsin recalled that the peoples of the two countries had been cooperating for more than five hundred years and that everything positive that had accumulated in Franco-Russian relations should be used in the future joint work.

This idea was also a pivotal one in a welcoming speech by French President Francois Mitterrand. "For centuries the concord between our country and yours has been one of constants in the history of Europe. The point is to further this great cause and to work jointly for Europe to assume structures and forms that would meet the requirements of the present day", Mitterrand said.

The details of the one-on-one meeting between the two presidents indicate that the talks began without a "warming up" and focussed on major problems, primarily disarmament issues, nuclear disarmament, in the first place, France's attitude towards the recent Russian initiatives in this respect, the participation of France and Russia in this process, the state of affairs in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), nuclear safety issues that worry the West greatly, and the course of the economic reform in Russia and bilateral cooperation.

Judging by pronouncements of the president of Russia at the close of the first round of his talks with the French president, Russia expects specific results. "We count on Paris' understanding of everything concerning Russia's policy of nuclear disarmament as well as on France's tangible support for Russian economic reforms," Yeltsin explained.

Members of the official delegation of Russia had meetings with directors of various ministries and deparments of France. Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on Wednesday [5 February] met his French counterpart Roland Dumas. They discussed in detail the specific provisions of a bilateral treaty which is expected to be signed on Friday [7 February], the final day of the Russian president's visit.

Marshal of the Air Force Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander of the joint Armed Forces of the CIS, headed directly from the airport for a meeting with Jacques Mellick, secretary of state for defence. They are reported to have discussed matters connected with the implementation of a bilateral agreement on cooperation, signed in Moscow in September last year.

Shaposhnikov and Mellick gave a positive appraisal of the results of military inspectors' tours within the framework of measures to ensure mutual confidence and security.

Marshal Shaposhnikov informed Mellick in detail of the present- day situation in Russia and spoke of disarmament problems within the CIS.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar met with Pierre Beregovoy, French minister of state, and minister of economics, planning and budget.

French official circles emphasised today again that they attach an "immense importance" to Yeltsin's visit.

The visit is of extreme importance to France because it is a question of determining a clear-cut legal framework of relations with one of the most powerful countries in the world, points out LE MONDE.

Local media are also highlighting the Russian president's visit.

The most popular French TV-1 television network broadcast Yeltsin's interview live tonight at peak-viewing time.

The first day of Yeltsin's stay in France ended with a grand reception in Versailles. The reception was given in his honour in Le Grand Trianon Palace on behalf of the French president. The palace was assigned to be the temporary residence of the president of Russia.

Yeltsin Warns: 'Dictator May Surface'

LD0602153192 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1500 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Excerpts] President Boris Yeltsin has called on the world community to give support to the reforms in Russia. If they fail to be carried out, above all that in the economy, Yeltsin warned, a dictator may surface. He said he could feel those in brown and red shirts breathing down the back of his neck. Yeltsin spoke at the mayor's office in Paris today. [passage omitted]

On problems of disarmament, Boris Yeltsin said, Russia was prepared to drastically reduce nuclear arms. They could greatly exceed the limits set by the Soviet-American treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons and bring the number of nuclear warheads at their disposal down to 2,500.

Speaks at Versailles Reception

LD0502232192 Moscow TASS in English 2236 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Lyudmila Aleksandrova, Yuriy Sizov, Viktor Khrekov, Vladimir Shvets: all quotation marks as received]

[Text] Paris February 6 ITAR-TASS—A grand reception was given in honour of President Boris Yeltsin of the

Russian Federation and his wife in Le Grand Trianon Palace in Versailles on Wednesday [5 February]. The reception was attended by prominent statesmen, political and public figures of France and members of the official delegation accompanying the Russian president.

Speaking at the reception, Boris Yeltsin said:

"Esteemed M. President,

Esteemed Mme. Mitterrand,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I think you would agree with me that the recent days have been filled with special content. It is for the first time in decades that peoples divided by ideological myths and political doctrines not only rejected the stereotypes of confrontation but also launched strenuous efforts to remake the world on a genuinely humanistic basis."

"The exhaustive confrontation ended. It was not of benefit to anyone. Neither did it make any people happy.

Even countries which managed to retain their economic health and ensure a high living standard for their citizens could not part with the feeling of fear and uncertainty about their future throughout all those years.

Any day could bring an irretrievable occurrence. But throughout the period people hoped that such a state of affairs in the world could not continue indefinitely. It contradicted not only the very nature of the human being but mankind as well.

Attempts were made repeatedly to change relations between peoples. Far from all of those attempts led to a positive result.

But each of them was valuable in itself.

They also remain in human memory as tragedies that the world community experienced.

In the 20th century the forces of evil got an opportunity to show their might.

The outcome was utterly clear—they are capable of everything but creation.

We all have come to realise now that the era of confrontation and the dictatorship of force should recede into the past.

This opinion was explicitly and unambiguously expressed by the leaders of 15 states at the United Nations Security Council summit.

I believe that our visit to France and talks with President Francois Mitterrand will make it possible to determine specific ways to attain this goal.

The formation of a new world order manifests itself primarily in interstate relations. Russia and France could do a good deal in this respect.

Our relations are rooted in the distant past. It must be said to the honour of our predecessors that the relations were mainly friendly.

A pronouncement by prominent French scholar Paul Langevin is close to my heart. He used to say: 'We need that country just as it needs us'.

I think this is equally true both to Russia and France.

Our states have always been worthy partners and have gained a sufficient experience of cooperation.

Life calls for a considerable renewal of Russo-French dialogue. Full continuity presupposes aspiration for new actions, and a new quality of cooperation.

A treaty between Russia and France will be signed during our visit. It will contain a legal basis for a qualitatively new stage in diverse fields of relations between our two states for many years ahead.

It is of particular importance to us that the time-tested French democracy and young Russian democracy solemnly reaffirm commitment to the ideals of power by the people and to the principles of freedom, justice and solidarity.

The declaration of the rights and freedom of individual and citizen, adopted by the Russian parliament in November 1991, is profoundly consonant with the declaration of the rights of the individual and citizen of the days of the great French revolution. The declaration's first article reads: 'The rights and freedom of the individual belong to him since his birth'. The defence of the democratic freedoms and institutions nowadays becomes one of the main areas of our cooperation.

Cardinal reforms aimed at stabilising the economy and transferring it to market relations are being effected in Russia. They are proceeding with difficulty because an anti-market mentality, the mentality of universal dependence has taken shape over decades. But we have firmly embarked upon the road of radical transformations and will not swerve off it.

"Russia is one of the initiators of the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Soviet Union no longer exists but its problems remain. We are realists and understand that problems which have been piling up for years cannot be solved at one stroke. The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States is a process which should take into account the interests of all member-states, as well as geopolitical factors and the situation in Europe and the world.

"To ensure reliable unified control of nuclear weapons needs special attention during the transitional period. Everything is being done in this delicate field to exclude any unsanctioned use of nuclear weapons, prevent their proliferation and carry out radical cuts of these weapons.

"The talks in Paris will undoubtedly have a practical influence on economic, industrial, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation.

"I can feel that people in France understand that stability in Europe and the whole world will largely depend on the success of radical reforms in Russia and other Commonwealth states, mostly in economy.

"I welcome France's assistance to the Russian economy. We have agreed in principle to switch the major part of previously issued French credits to Russia.

"Cooperation will develop between state, combined, cooperative and private associations and enterprises in both countries. Of special importance to us is France's support for Russia's integration into the world economic and financial organisations, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as well as France's positive role in cooperation between G-7 countries.

"A big step forward is being made in Russian-French cooperation in the social sphere, training personnel, using France's experience in building a market infrastructure, and solving the problem of employment and social security.

"We are ready to discuss proposals aimed to solve the remaining problems in this sphere.

"We are grateful to the French people for humanitarian aid to the Russian people in this difficult time.

"A few words about our cooperation in Europe.

"Russia is open for partnership with all organisations contributing to security and unity of the continent. We know that France has a similar position.

"The treaty which we, Mister President, will sign proves this. We support the idea of an all-European agreement on security and call on all partners to help develop it. Accord and friendship in Europe and the world is one of the most important elements for promoting principles of freedom and peace on our planet."

The Russian president proposed a toast to the prosperity of France and the French people, development of Russian-French relations and health of the French president, his wife and all those present.

Prime Minister Promises Industrial Aid

LD0602143792 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 1400 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Boris Yeltsin was awaiting some good news and during his luncheon at the Quai d'Orsay just now, the prime minister told him that France would release 1.5 billion francs to help Russia acquire industrial goods. Edith Cresson has also confirmed the agreement for the financing of 1.5-billion-francs-worth of wheat in exchange for oil products. So Boris Yeltsin's call has been heard. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Roland Dumas also assured Boris Yeltsin that France would back Russia's candidacy to various international organizations such as the European Council, the IMF, or the World Bank.

D'Estaing Urges Western Aid

LD0602134892 Moscow TASS in English 1038 GMT 6 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Lyudmila Aleksandrova, Sergey Batyrev, and Yuriy Sizov]

[Text] Versailles February 6 TASS—Western Europe should mobilise all resources to provide food aid to Russia, Valery Giscard d'Estaing, leader of the Union for French Democracy, told TASS on Thursday [6 February] after meeting visiting Russian President Boris Yeltsin. "I assured (Boris) Yeltsin that I shall do everything possible and convince my colleagues in the Europarliament and Chairman of the Commission of European Communities Jacques Delors to pool efforts and help Russia", the former French president said.

D'Estaing believes Russian reforms are "moves in the right direction", but time will be needed for them to give fruit. The West should provide many-sided aid to ease the life of the peoples of Russia in this crucial transitional period, he added.

It would be unwise for the West to underestimate the scope of Russian transformation and delay the necessary aid, D'Estaing warned. Destabilisation in Russia, as well as in other regions of the former Soviet Union, can inflict considerable damage to the whole world comunity, he added.

Sources close to the Russian president informed TASS that D'Estaing told Yeltsin he is sure the reforms are irreversible and supported the political course of the Russian president.

Oil Exploration Agreement Signed

LD0602142192 Moscow TASS in English 1139 GMT 6 Feb 92

[By BUSINESS-TASS correspondent Pavel Karikov]

[Text] Moscow February 6 TASS—Russia and France today signed a big contract for oil exploration and production in the central part of Russia, the BUSINESS-TASS correspondent was told at the Moscow office of the French company Elf Aquitaine. The contract is worth several billion francs.

Under the contract, Elf Aquitaine receives the exclusive right to prospect for and tap an oil field near Saratov on the terms of the joint production with Russia over 20 years.

In future, Elf Aquitaine also intends to sign an agreement with Kazakhstan to tap an oil field in Aktyubinsk.

French Reportage on Yeltsin's Visit

WA0602145192

For reportage on the visit by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to France, including reports on his talks with President Francois Mitterrand, please see the France section of the 6 February West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Ecological Cooperation With Norway Cited

LD0502200892 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Video report by correspondent V. Skvortsov; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The meeting between Gennadiy Burbulis and Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Stoltenberg has effectively been a continuation of the former's visit to Finland and Sweden. They discussed ways of establishing full-blooded relations between the two countries.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Kozyrev will leave on a visit to Norway in the near future. It seems that there is nothing threatening the prospects for Russian-Norwegian cooperation. The only disputed issue, on the establishment of our maritime border, has already been three-quarters resolved, according to Burbulis. Let us recall that we continue the development and exploitation of the oil shelf in the Barents Sea. All issues will be conclusively resolved in the near future.

The Norwegian side is also worried by the ecological situation in the north of Europe. Our Sever-Nikel and Pechenga-Nikel plants on the Kola Peninsula are a real threat there. The Norwegians are willing to take part in making them ecologically safe. According to Burbulis, matters to do with a possible increase in our military presence in the region, as a result of the troop pullout from the Baltic states, were not discussed.

Gordiyevskiy Plays Down UK Party Contacts

MK0502132792 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Feb 92 p 1

[Report by Vladimir Abarinov and Grigoriy Krichevskiy under the "Top Secret" (in English) rubric: "Neil Kinnock Cozied Up to CPSU But Did Not Sell Out His Country. Text of Staraya Ploshchad Secret Documents Doing Rounds of British Press"]

[Excerpts] The Soviet leadership and the British Labour Party maintained close contacts. This emerges from cables sent by the Soviet Embassy in London dated 1979-1985 that have been found in CPSU Central Committee archives by former BBC correspondent Tim Sebastian. The diplomatic dispatches set out the views of British policy held by Labour Party leaders Neil Kinnock, Michael Foot, and Denis Healey. THE SUNDAY EXPRESS claims that high-ranking Soviet diplomats, including USSR Ambassador Viktor Popov, tried to help Kinnock in the last parliamentary election. Kinnock visited the Soviet Embassy and criticized Margaret Thatcher's cabinet for siting U.S. cruise missiles on British territory. [passage omitted]

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent telephoned Oleg Gordiyevskiy and asked him to comment on the British press articles.

[Gordiyevskiy] These documents are nothing sensational. It is to the Labour Party's credit that they said nothing during these conversations in contravention of their official political platform. The fact that the Labour Party felt far more comfortable at the time in the Soviet Embassy than the U.S. Embassy, say, is another matter. This is due to the coincidence of their positions. At that time the Labour Party advocated unilateral Western nuclear disarmament, as you know—which is, incidentally, what caused them to lose the election. Of course, the publication of the documents now is also linked with the election campaign. The rivals' chances are roughly the same. Even if the Labour Party has renounced the views it held then, they showed greater cordiality, trust, and openness during conversations with Soviet officials than they should have—something that gives rise to a quite natural ironical view among the British public. In turn the Labour Party is rightly indignant that the secret memorandum has been made public.

[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA] How far are these warm interparty relations linked with the general course pursued by the then Soviet leadership toward left-wing Western parties?

[Gordiyevskiy] They do of course come entirely within the context of the CPSU's activity of involving the Socialist International in mainstream Soviet foreign policy. Moreover Britain was to be the scene of a breakthrough; however this did not occur owing to the Labour Party's defeat in the 1983 election.

[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA] What role did KGB agents play in this alliance?

[Gordiyevskiy] At the time the KGB did not have access to high-ranking leaders. After the latest deportations there were no more than 20 officers left in the Soviet Embassy. They had no major contacts in political circles and had no chance of influencing the positions of the major political parties.

[NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA] In your opinion, how did the documents come into the THE SUNDAY TIMES' possession?

[Gordiyevskiy] Duplicate recordings of the conversations were made and sent to two addresses: to the Central Committee International Department and the Foreign Ministry. THE SUNDAY TIMES has pointed to the Central Committee archives as its source. In his article Tim Sebastian hints (in 1985 he was, incidentally, among the British citizens deported from Moscow in retaliation for the deportation of Soviet citizens from London) that he did not acquire the documents entirely legally [Gordiyevskiy ends].

CPSU Central Committee archives have been sealed and removed from Staraya Ploshchad by the Russian Prosecutor's Office. According to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's information, this is not the first leak from the same source. As we can see, the sale of secret documents is continuing. In this case the documents have been made public. But where are the guarantees that agents for the custodians of the secrets are not buying them in order to bury them forever.

EEC Representative Explains Aid Monitoring

PM2901150692 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 29 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Sergey Taranov: "Rumors of Theft of Humanitarian Aid Seem To Be Exaggerated"]

[Text] In recent days a large-scale operation to deliver humanitarian aid from Western countries to the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] has begun. Moscow has already received some 9,000 tonnes of food, and that is by no means all. In the first three months of the year more meat, butter, and baby food will be shipped from the EEC states to St. Petersburg than in the whole of last year. In just two days—12 and 13 February—the inhabitants of Yekaterinburg will receive more than 200 tonnes of food and 80 tonnes of medical supplies, which will be delivered by USAF heavy aircraft. But who will receive this almost fabulous wealth—the sick and needy, or the trade mafia?

Catherine Magnan, a member of the EC Commission delegation, who is in Moscow, answered this question unequivocally:

"As far as our deliveries to Moscow, worth a total of 250 million ECUs [European currency units], are concerned, there is no evidence of mass thefts here. The EEC Commission has signed contracts with three private firms from France, Britain, and Germany. The French monitor the arrival and unloading of humanitarian aid at the airports and at border posts, and the Germans—30 of the firm's staffers in Moscow and 50 in St. Petersburg—monitor the storage of produce in warehouses and stores. Incidentally, the food from EEC countries is not distributed, but sold in Moscow stores, and at a fixed price—butter, for instance, costs 56 rubles a kilogram. The money made is paid into social funds for aid to the people most affected by price liberalization.

"As for the talk about the theft and resale of humanitarian aid by commercial stores, this is most likely to do with aid sent by German social organizations, which the EEC has nothing to do with."

Catherine Magnan's optimism can probably be shared by the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, whose mayor A. Sobchak has issued an ordinance "On Immediate Measures for the Reception and Sale of Humanitarian Aid." IZVESTIYA's correspondent Yevgeniy Solomenko reports that freight from abroad will henceforth be delivered not to the warehouses of civil defense and military units—where not infrequently there is no one who is materially accountable and the produce is registered not by composition but by weight—but directly to the cold stores and storage facilities of the meat combines, dairies, and trade enterprises, where it is easier to keep an eye on them, or else to sell them without unnecessary intermediaries. The city has designated 50 specialized stores to trade in "humanitarian" meat and butter. The St. Petersburg City Hall Committee on Social Questions is setting up an integrated computer accounting system, into which information on all foreign freight will be fed.

Whereas things are more or less clear as regards the sale of food through the stores, free distribution of food, medical supplies, and consumer goods is still causing concern. No one can guarantee that these goods will reach their targets even within the hospitals or children's homes and that it will not turn out as it did at St. Petersburg's No. 4 Children's Hospital, where baby carriages, children's clothes, and food worth 3.5 million FRG marks were stolen by employees at the health care institution, from chief physician I. Zhuravleva down to the medical orderlies and members of the commission to receive humanitarian aid. Here the only hope is for efficient work by the militia and honesty among officials. But in some places their "freedom" of action will be severely restricted. A group of specialists that has arrived in the Urals, sent by the U.S. government, have declared resolutely that they personally will monitor the mechanism for distributing aid, which will go primarily to old people's and children's homes and to the homeless and unemployed. As long as the cost is not substantial, the Americans are prepared to grant aid in large quantities in a different form, for instance to send to the Urals not only ready meals prepared for U.S. Army cafeterias.

Irkutsk 'Sister City' Sends Medical Supplies

LD0602073892 Moscow TASS in English 0852 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Khodiy]

[Text] Irkutsk February 5 (TASS)—Humanitarian aid cargo from Eugene, United States, a sister city of Irkutsk, have been turned over to the Irkutsk children's hospital. The shipment includes diagnosing equipment, baby food, bandages and other medical materials.

Rick Cleveland, a lawyer from Eugene who accompanied the cargo, said a major part of the money for purchasing food and medication was raised by Eugene schoolchildren.

"The Irkutsk children's hospital will soon observe its centenary. It gives medical assistance to children from many regions of Siberia. This is why we are glad to receive aid from our far-away friends—children and adults from Eugene, our sister city, at this difficult time," Tatiyana Lyashenko, chief physician of the hospital, said.

Low-Income Families Receive Aid in Khabarovsk

LD0602074392 Moscow TASS in English 0750 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yuriy Vytrishchak]

[Text] Khabarovsk February 5 (TASS)—Thirty-five tonnes of humanitarian aid, provided to the far eastern city of Khabarovsk by its twinned Japanese city of Niigata, was delivered on Wednesday [5 February] to 1,300 low-income residents.

The list of the poorest families in the city was compiled by the local "Nadezhda" (Hope) charity foundation, whose employees visited the families to find out which necessities they need most of all.

Transportation for the aid load was arranged by the far eastern military.

The "Nadezhda" foundation is now waiting for humanitarian aid from Portland (USA) - another twinned city of Khabarovsk. A big load of food and medicines is ready to be shipped across the ocean.

The foundation also plans to stage a TV marathon in twinned cities to raise money for the sick children of Khabarovsk.

Medicine Arrives in Ethnic German Region

LD0602064992 Moscow TASS in English 1514 GMT 4 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valentin Pavlov]

[Text] Barnaul February 4 (TASS)—A plane carrying medical equipment and 39 tonnes of medicines from Germany landed on Tuesday [4 February] at the Barnaul airport.

It is the second plane with humanitarian aid on board supplied by the German Aselborn firm to residents of the Altai region in the last two weeks. The firm has established close contacts with this region in the Altai, primarily populated by ethnic Germans. The firm has built a bread-baking and a cheese-making plant, and is now engaged in training personnel to work with German equipment. A mobile meat-packing plant is planned to be built. It will supply peasants and farmers in several regions of the steppe Altai with its products.

Cooperation between Germany and the Altai region is carried out in the spheres of the German language, culture and education, as well as in the spheres of mass media and economy. Germany renders assistance not only to ethnic Germans in the Altai region, but also to all other residents of the area.

Morocco To Provide Humanitarian Assistance

OW0402174792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Mayorov, Igor Porshnev, and "others" from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In the next few days, a load of humanitarian aid is expected to arrive from Morocco in one of the Russian ports. According to sources close to the Moroccan Embassy in Moscow, the shipment consists of a thousand tonnes of food worth over million dollars [as received].

Mediation Offered in Armenia-Azerbaijan Dispute

OW0402161692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1412 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia wants to act as a mediator between Armenia and Azerbaijan to find a political solution to their dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh which aggravated lately, a high-ranking Russian diplomat who preferred to remain anonymous told IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent on Tuesday [4 February]. He gave explanations in connection with what Russia's foreign minister Andrey Kozyrev proposed in Istanbul. The head of Russian diplomacy suggested that his Armenian and Azerbaijani counterparts should come to Moscow for a conference. According to him, Russia is extremely concerned about the "actual war waged at its southern borders".

When asked as to what might have prompted this initiative the diplomat said that a "sort of code of behavior is beginning to form within the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]", on the one hand. On the other, not only Russia, but also Armenia and Azerbaijan are now, after the Prague forum, members of the CSCE. In the meantime criteria worked out in the framework of the Helsinki process provide for using mediation in the endeavors to settle such conflicts, the diplomat said.

Military Adviser on Nuclear Arms, Crimea

PM3101154692 Milan L'UNITA in Italian 26 Jan 92 p 12

[Interview with Sergey Karaganov, Russian Government adviser on military questions, by Jolanda Bufalini in Milan; date not given]

[Text] Milan—Sergey Karaganov is one of the young representatives of the new Russian ruling class which has supplanted the Soviet gerontocracy. An economist by training, he is the Russian Government's adviser on military and foreign questions. He is in Milan for the meeting of the council for relations between Italy and the United States on investments in the former USSR. We spoke with him about the most recent problem—that of the dangerous opposition between the two sister republics of Ukraine and Russia, which until recently formed the imposing basis of Soviet power and which are now protagonists in a problem which involves world diplomacy. "Relations between us and Kiev are so complex," Karaganov said, "that even the treaty on conventional arms is now inappropriate." And in the nuclear sphere, the West "must make haste and help us in the technical and political spheres." The instability of the situation does not guarantee that the pledges given now in Kiev will be valid in the future.

[Bufalini] Mr. Karaganov, tension between Russia and Ukraine is again high. This time the Russian deputies have adopted a resolution in favor of a review of the Crimea's place in Ukraine. How do you view this stance?

[Karaganov] The review of borders is now unacceptable on principle because there are no borders in the former USSR which are not artificial. However, I understand our deputies (although I would not have voted for an official document) because Kiev is pursuing an extremely rigid policy which does not take any account of the interests of the other republics.

[Bufalini] The resolution links this question of the Crimea to that of the former Soviet Fleet in the Black Sea. What is the connection between the two questions?

[Karaganov] We are facing a de facto nationalization of the whole Fleet and I believe that the fundamental reason for this lies in the desire to block the Russian separatist movement in the Crimea.

[Bufalini] But the majority of the inhabitants of the peninsula voted for Ukrainian independence, what risk is there of separation?

[Karaganov] First, it was not a large majority but little more than half of the voters. Second, the referendum did not ask: "Do you want to separate from Russia?" but asked for support for the declaration of independence adopted by the Kiev parliament. They are two very different things.

[Bufalini] I have the impression that there are underlying political and economic reasons for the national and military tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Is the Kiev government not afraid that, by following Russia on the path of radical reform, it will be the victim of social upheavals?

[Karaganov] Ukraine and the other republics, aside from Armenia, are not introducing any reforms, while Russia has led the way in the changes. Furthermore, a traditional ruling class is in power in Kiev.

[Bufalini] It seems to me that Russian democrats are coming round to the idea of boycotting Ukrainian military production in the hope of helping to overthrow the government. Is that true?

[Karaganov] That is a miscalculation. We cannot be certain that new men would be better than the existing ones. The Kiev government comprises experienced and able people. What would the arrival in power of even more rigid people guarantee us?

[Bufalini] All the republics which possess nuclear weapons have expressed the desire to get rid of them, do you think that these positions can be trusted?

[Karaganov] Different statements are being made about nuclear and conventional weapons. There is a real possibility of reducing tactical nuclear weapons. With the West's technical and political aid, it is possible to achieve the complete withdrawal of tactical weapons from the Ukraine and that will make possible a drastic reduction in the deployment of that kind of weapon. However, it is necessary to move quickly, within six months, because political instability could bring people to power in Kiev who do not feel at all obliged by the agreements between James Baker and Leonid Kravchuk.

[Bufalini] And what about conventional weapons?

[Karaganov] In my view the Vienna conventional arms treaty does not correspond to the current situation. Of course, ratification has political value but, although I myself took part in drawing up the treaty, ratifying it would have no military significance. In Ukraine, there is a huge army, around 1 million men, the biggest army on Soviet territory. The Ukrainian Government wants to create a national force. Talking of reduction amid this confusion is unrealistic. What must be maintained, partly by ratification, is the reduction process as a whole, maintaining the principle of military openness, and the confidence-building and inspection mechanisms.

Paper Responds to Reader's Anti-Kazakh Views

PM3101131992 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 30 Jan 92 p 2

[Letter from S. Lyubkin, a SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA reader from Dolgoprudnyy, Moscow Oblast, with appended comment from SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA Political Observer Aleksandr Frolov: "Discussion With a Reader: The Nuclear Factor: Alpha and Omega"]

[Excerpts] **"Let Us Draw the 'Green Line'"**

Since 1 January 1992, the day that newspaper prices rose, I have been buying only SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA at the news stands. I read it, then my father reads it, then a neighbor—a war veteran—reads it.

I support the newspaper's stand, as I wrote to you quite recently. But I take issue with many questions and want to challenge your newspaper's authors. Here is an example. On 14 January 1992, commentator A. Frolov published an article entitled "The Nuclear Factor: Alpha and Omega." He set himself a seemingly noble goal in discussing the theme "How not to annoy Russia?" I read this report with interest, especially since the author mentioned Olzhas Suleymenov and Lev Gumilev.

Frolov's idea is not new and is not heavily disguised—he suggests to the Russian people (for the umpteenth time) that they bear their own cross plus that of the "other fellow." I have in mind independent Kazakhstan. This is my opinion: the time has passed when Russia used to sacrifice its national interests for the sake of the "fraternal peoples."

What is Russia's national interest in Kazakhstan, in Frolov's opinion? Well, of course, it is "to realize both peoples' fundamental vital interests"! For some reason this eccentric political expert is sure that Kazakhstan is becoming the leader of the Islamic world. Well, let it! However, do not forget that Kazakhstan's northern rayons have no connection with the Islamic world. To put it crudely—this area is not Kazakhstan at all but part of the Urals and Siberia, in other words, Russian land. This land, Russian since time immemorial, ended up in Kazakhstan because the bolsheviks (in the twenties) considered there were insufficient proletarians in Turkestan. For the revolutionary transformations in Turkestan, however, a proletariat was rapidly found—in the form of Russian workers. Because there were not enough workers' cities on the territory of the "Great Steppe," the "Kremlin day-dreamers" pushed the nearest Russian cities into Kazakhstan. Thus it was that Uralsk, Guryev, Petropavlovsk, Pavlodar, Semipalatinsk, and Ust-Kamenogorsk ended up outside Russia....

Frolov knows that, of course, but he insists that Russia should give way once more—it should pay with its land for "stepping up cooperation" and "resolving disputes in a mutually acceptable way."

Why be obscure, Mr Frolov? You should have said simply: Let us buy the Muslims' favorable attitude toward Russia with territorial concessions—simply and clearly...That has happened only once before in Serbia, in the autonomous province of Kosovo. In 50 years the Muslims ousted the Slavs from their land—that is the result for you!

The Muslim super-race [superetnos] absorbs the Slav race quite easily—every Terek Cossack and many inhabitants of Azerbaijan and other "border" regions know that simple truth from personal experience. Unless Kazakhstan is "dealt with" now (returning the age-old Russian lands), in 50 years the Kazakhs will oust the Russians from Uralsk, the virgin lands, Irtysh, and Rudnyy Altay.

I realize that Commentator Frolov does not give a damn about that. He even writes that quite frankly. Well, I am glad that he expresses his personal opinion freely. Who will hear my opinion, which is different from Frolov's? My neighbor, Nikolay Vasilyevich? He has only just come back from Checheno-Ingushetia, where the Muslim super-race "exerted diverse influences on him" (in Frolov's words).

Even though I am "inferior in rank" to Commentator Frolov and do not have the same mastery of the pen as he, I, too, have a right to be heard!

Let us look at the map of the former Union with the eyes of a normal person and think: Is "transforming" these administrative borders into state borders conceivable? I personally think that Russia has things to share with the Ukraine and Belarus. But Kazakhstan is a different matter! In my view there is no sense in placing the Kazakh border between the Russian villages of Agafonovka and Talovka! Admittedly, Yeltsin and Nazarbayev think differently but that is their personal affair. I believe that to any normal person the following demand will seem fair: all Russian lands (which became part of Kazakhstan through a misunderstanding) must be given back! The border between these two states must be redrawn. I would call it (in advance) the Green Line because in time it will become a border between the Muslim and Christian worlds. That should not be forgotten!

Let us begin! I arm myself with an atlas of the USSR and begin from the shores of the Caspian Sea. In the Volga River delta the villages of Kotyayevka and Ganyushkino are shown on Kazakh territory. We shall return them to Russia. The Saratov to Astrakhan railroad crosses the Kazakh border four times. Strategic communications lines must be on national territory. Let us straighten out the border. It will not be possible to recover all the land of the Urals Cossack Army. Let us make do with the northern section together with the city of Uralsk. Guryev remains in Kazakhstan. As far as the Tobol River the Green Line will follow the administrative border of Orenburg Oblast. From the city of Lisakovsk, the Green Line turns toward Lake Kushmurun. Many Russian villages will be left in Kazakhstan. What is to be done? We do not want to take too much—let Kazakhstan retain half of the virgin lands. The Green Line will coincide with the southern border of Kokchetav Oblast. This is another concession to Kazakhstan (or a Russian gift). From Lake Siletiteniz the Green Line runs between Pavlodar and Ekibastuz, crosses the Irtysh River, and reaches to Proletarka settlement. The Green Line follows the administrative border of the East Kazakhstan Oblast to Lake Zaysan. And finally from Kurchum settlement the Green Line stretches to the settlement of Alekseyevka on the Chinese border.

The path is at an end. As we can see, according to my plan Russia takes the minimum of the land that belongs to it by right. Kazakhstan will still be a vast territory. There are no mutual claims!

The restoration of Russia's historic borders means the restoration of elementary historical justice. How simple this is...and how difficult at the same time!

I let all my friends and colleagues read this. They are simple people (sovki, as the newspapers call them nowadays). Every last one agreed with me. They have one wish—to fence themselves off from the Muslims, to live a peaceful life, and not to bestow their spirituality on the "former brothers." I hope, esteemed editors, that you will understand how important it is to listen even (!) to

an ordinary Russian and sometimes (!) let him speak in a people's newspaper! Respectfully,
S. Lyubkin, Dolgoprudnyy, Moscow Oblast.

[Frolov's reply] Dangerous Schemes

Esteemed Comrade Lyubkin! [passage omitted]

I want to take issue with you, too. You want to restore justice and to that end you propose drawing a "green line" across Kazakh territory. This term has a quite precise significance. In modern history the best-known "green lines" divide Nicosia and Beirut in two. Their essential attributes are barbed wire, ruined buildings, heaps of rubble, and snipers on both sides. [passage omitted]

You are convinced that when the Russian-Kazakh border is redrawn there will be no mutual claims but the only evidence that you cite is a philological analysis of geographical names. To be blunt, this method of argument is very weak. The other side will also find a good few philologists to remind you, for example, that the river on which Volgograd (Tsaritsyn) stands is not the Tsaritsa but the Sary-su, which is the Turkish for Yellow River, so is it not clear who lived there before. The Volga itself was known as Ra in ancient times. Is this historical fact not of interest to the Egyptians, then?..

Therefore, I do not share your optimism. Not only will there be mutual claims but also clashes, which will make Karabakh or the Serbian-Croatian conflict seem like a children's game of toy soldiers. In the demarcation zone that you propose there are 25 million people on the Russian side and 7 million on the Kazakh side and a vast raw material, agricultural, and industrial potential, including environmentally hazardous industries. When industry inevitably comes to a halt and the fields are deserted, will Russia survive such a blow to its already sick economy? When there are millions of refugees arriving from there will Russia be able to give them all food and warmth? [passage omitted]

No less dangerous, in my view, are the now fashionable endless calculations about who owes most to whom and who is living off whom. I hear echoes of that in your claim that Russia is carrying the cross "for the other fellow" and that the time has thus come for the Russians to fence themselves off from the Muslims and "live a peaceful life."

The initiators of these schemes are well known people, they are all "leading figures." Here is what V. Selyunin, a major economic specialist and someone who is now getting vociferously indignant at the fact that a price ceiling has been preserved on bread and milk, has to say: "Kazakhstan could be accepted" into the CIS "without any conditions—but all... all the rest—they would hold their hands out for the same old subsidies. They should be told firmly: You have chosen the wrong door, gentlemen. This is not where they divide up the cake or hand out glasses of beer from the communal barrel. This is where people have banded together to exchange the fruits of their labor" (INZHENERNAYA GAZETA, 1992, No. 3).

It seems that the author of this proud statement has completely forgotten, for example, that the states of Central Asia (excluding Kazakhstan) and Azerbaijan produce 96.3 percent of the cotton grown in the CIS. Would we not all pay too high a price for such arrogance, what would we wear, dear comrade Lyubkin?! And if you and I, say, learn to live without underwear, will Russia's spinners and weavers, who process 70 percent of the "Muslim" cotton, be happy about losing their jobs? Incidentally, they do not just make calico out of cotton, they make smokeless gunpowder, too...

Recently in the foreign press there was a report that Pakistan is going to suggest to the five Central Asian states the joint construction of a railroad through the Afghan mountains to the shores of the Arabian Sea, thereby "realizing the age-old Russian dream of gaining access to the warm-water ports on the Indian Ocean." Take another look at the atlas, Comrade Lyubkin, and you will see quite easily the economic benefits that this undertaking offers Russia so long as it has good relations with the Islamic world and the harm that will result if relations do not work out.

I could go on listing Russia's current and long-term interests in Asia but of course you will agree with me that its main concern is the position of our fellow countrymen. If the Russian population's rights and interests are infringed they must be protected but at same time it should not be forgotten that even the slightest ill-considered gesture could have the opposite result. We have seen plenty of examples of that kind recently. Why make the same mistakes again?

However, the fact that the same old mistakes are repeated time after time strengthens my belief that someone stands to benefit from this. It is beneficial to divert people's attention from their desperate socioeconomic situation and channel their energy into futile ethnic strife and promote their own shabby interests behind the people's back. I shall quote just one example which really stunned me: some interethnic conflicts in Central Asia invariably come to a head in May and June, that is, when the opium poppies are being harvested, so that the forces of law and order have to be diverted from the countryside to the city. That is what is behind the most "patriotic" slogans sometimes.

So, Esteemed Comrade Lyubkin, let us try to see clearly and not be blinded by nationalism. After all, the press, which calls us "sovki," is already openly expressing concern at the "underdeveloped state of Russian self-awareness"—in other words, at the absence of mass chauvinist attitudes in the Russian people. Be careful! All sorts of provocation are possible here. Very soon today's "democrats" will have to account for what they have done which is why they are rapidly beginning to don the garb of "patriots" and are switching from promises of sausage to talk of "Russia's greatness."

As a Russian, who respects the honor and dignity of his people, I remain convinced that patriotism means not bringing Russia into conflict with its neighbors or its peoples with one another. There will be no need to redraw the borders if they unite us rather than divide us.

All the best to you. Be so kind as to show this letter to your father, your friends, and Nikolay Vasilyevich, your neighbor.

Official Says Georgian Border Needs Change

LD0402150192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0859 GMT 3 Feb 92

[By KRIM-PRESS-TASS correspondent Viktor Zhilyakov]

[Text] Sochi, 3 Feb (TASS)—The status of the border between Russia and Georgia urgently needs to be changed, to turn it from an administrative boundary into a state one. This is the view of the head of administration of Sochi city, Nikolay Karpov. The use of the patrol-and-sentry battalion of internal troops recently assigned to help the local militia is the first step toward reinforcing the border. The new subunit will take control of a sector of the Russia-Georgia border running along the river Psou. The militia post here checks vehicles with Georgian registration plates, to impede the uncontrolled export from Russia of food and goods in short supply and the transit of weapons. "Wanderers"—resourceful drivers who manage to ford the river at places where it is not too deep—also have to be watched for. The administration's actions have found support from Adler Cossacks. They have suggested setting up Cossack farm settlements all along the border which would assume some of the tasks of guarding it.

Defector Reportedly Exposed Spy Ring in Italy

PM0502101592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 1 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 6

[Report by correspondent Mikhail Ilinskiy followed by commentary by Tatyana Samolis, press secretary of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service director: "Scandal in Italy over Soviet Spy Ring"—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] Rome—IZVESTIYA published in its yesterday's edition a REUTER report that our former diplomat S. Illarionov had provided clues helping to expose a Soviet spy ring in Italy. Today we are publishing our Rome correspondent's report on this subject and a commentary by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Press Bureau.

An extraordinary situation developed in February 1990. The wife of Sergey Illarionov, Soviet vice-consul in Genoa, telephoned the mission and said that her husband had a bad cold and would not go to work for several days. There was an epidemic of colds in Genoa at that time, therefore Illarionova's statement did not raise any doubts. Only five days later did it become known that the vice-consul and his wife had shut up their apartment on the fifth floor of a building in the Marassi district of Genoa 13 February, taken two suitcases full of their belongings and valuables down to their white Golf, and drove off without paying the landlord two-and-a-half months' rent,.

And so to present everything as it happened according to the Italian newspapers' reconstruction of events: The Illarionovs reached the airport and flew out to the United States on the first flight. There the 35-year-old vice-consul, a KGB staffer, began to talk.

"He began to tell all," the Florence newspaper LA NAZIONE writes, "all he knew about intelligence and counterintelligence activities in Italy." As CORRIERE DELLA SERA notes, the Soviet "agent 007" took with him not only his personal possessions but also encoded lists of KGB agents in Italy, as well as in Europe, and information about the covers under which the agents were operating.

By whom, when, and how was Illarionov recruited? The Italian press does not answer these delicate questions and does not try to make any guesses. The newspaper LA NAZIONE nevertheless noted: "Illarionov's defection was for money and love for the West, where he lived well, and for this reason he exposed the spy ring—to which he himself belonged—to the U.S. special services. He betrayed 20 Italian informers who were allegedly involved in industrial espionage."

Illarionov had previously worked for a few years in Milan, and since June 1990 in Genoa. He was there for six months in all, then fled across the ocean. It emerges from the press reports that the vice-consul "feared returning to Moscow most of all and is now somewhere in California."

It is clear that, within the NATO framework, the "turncoat 007's" testimonies might interest not only the U.S. special services but also the country where the vice-consul had worked. After analyzing for several months the documents which had been received, the highest echelons of power in Italy were informed of the results. This came at the same time as the extensive work which was being done in that country to reform the legal system. Therefore, the question of putting an end to espionage activities at a time of peaceful development and fundamental changes in international relations took on a political hue.

Late in the evening of 28 January, the Council of Ministers received at the Chigi Palace (the government's residence) a document which, according to CORRIERE DELLA SERA, contained the basic information: It named several Italian agents allegedly in the KGB's service or within its sphere of activities. We are talking about 20 employees of major national enterprises in the defense sector. They include Oto Melara (La Spezia), Ansaldo, Italimpianti, Piaggio, Elsag, and Marconi.

Illarionov's testimony casts doubt on these famous and prestigious firms. But much of the former KGB staffer's testimony needs official proof and confirmation, which are lacking for the time being. According to CORRIERE DELLA SERA, "even if such confirmation were to be forthcoming, no one would want to admit that people in these enterprises are working for the East's special services and 'exporting' industrial secrets. In any case the putative spies would be personally liable for the crimes committed."

Criminal law should punish treachery sternly. This is the general and unalterable viewpoint of article writers in the Italian newspapers. But the Italian authorities have gotten themselves into an awkward position. They would not want the good relations between Italy and Russia to be damaged.

Commentary by Tatyana Samolis, press secretary of the director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service:

"Intelligence service staffer S. Illarionov really did work in Italy. Last year he took the path of treason and fled to the United States together with his wife. As for the more than 20 'Soviet spies' allegedly exposed as a result of Illarionov's revelations, we are not going to comment on this information. We do, however, want to emphasize that all developed states are engaged in industrial espionage. The NATO powers in particular attempt to get hold of each other's industrial and scientific secrets with the intelligence services' assistance. This may seem unsavory but the fact of the matter is that intelligence services act in their countries' national interests."

Problems Besetting Indian Ties Viewed

PM0302143792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 5

[Article by correspondent Nikolay Paklin: "Russia-India: Old Debts Hampering New Cooperation"]

[Text] Delhi—How are India's relations with Russia and the other former Soviet republics developing? This is perhaps the most topical question in India at the moment. Its discussion is no longer confined to the corridors of power in Delhi.

All kinds of people are waiting for an answer: the Indian military, who do not know whether they will continue to receive our combat equipment and the spare parts for it; the heads of large enterprises in the state sector who are worried about the future of unfinished power plants and other industrial installations for which the former USSR had agreed to give credit; and traders whose export freight for our country is being held up at ports and warehouses.

Preliminary Meeting in Moscow

Delhi had originally hoped that the situation would be clarified last November, during a visit to Moscow by an Indian delegation led by Indian Foreign Minister M. Solanki. However, it proved to be "too political" in the sense that the sides merely demonstrated their will to continue cooperation. They did not enter into a meaningful discussion of our future relations. Distracted by the domestic political turmoil, our leaders did not have time for the finer points of relations with India. A compromise proposal was made, however to revisit specific issues of cooperation in the near future at the level of high-ranking experts. During a meeting with M. Solanki, Russian President B.N. Yeltsin proposed signing a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation Between Russia and India, which would supersede the treaty between the USSR and India signed by the two countries' foreign ministers in 1971.

The Indian side agreed to these two proposals. Delhi began to make active preparations for the new round of talks. The delegation to go to Moscow included professionals in high state positions and was headed by J.N. Dixit, an experienced Indian diplomat and foreign ministry secretary. He is now considered to be one of the main architects of Indian foreign policy. The Indian delegation's visit to Moscow was postponed several times. But the Indian side apparently bears no grudge: it is aware of the very complex situation in Russia and the other Commonwealth states.

The visit and talks eventually took place. What was the main cause of India's dissatisfaction? The fact that the head of the Indian delegation was unable to meet with B. Yeltsin. He had brought the Russian president a personal message from Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao. Appreciating that Yeltsin was extremely busy, Delhi had until the very last minute hoped for a meeting nevertheless. In the opinion of Indian politicians, it would have had important political significance.

India Dissatisfied With Rupee-Ruble Rate

The meeting did not take place, however. The Indian delegation also did not get to meet the Russian foreign minister. Those familiar with the mood in Delhi's upper circles will count these failed meetings as some of the minuses of the visit. There were also other minuses. The sides disagreed over the new exchange rate between the ruble and the rupee. India has persistently raised this problem recently, wanting the correlation to be reviewed in the rupee's favor.

Many Indian economists claim that the rupee-ruble rate is depressing Indian-Soviet trade. In reality, however, it has very indirect bearing on current trade operations; it only directly affects India's repayment of its debt to us on long-term state credits granted for the purchase in rubles of industrial equipment and military hardware. At the talks in Moscow the Indian delegation announced India's intention to try to change the rupee-ruble rate inasmuch as it does not reflect the real value of these currencies. According to Indian statistics, India's debt to us is in excess of 300 billion rupees (approximately $12 billion dollars). So far India has always regularly paid its debts on time. However, India would like to reduce its debt by changing the exchange rate between the ruble and the rupee. That would be to our disadvantage, of course, particularly in view of the difficult economic conditions in which we now find ourselves. But there is a problem, and a mutually acceptable solution will nevertheless have to be sought.

During the talks the Indian delegation also raised the question of continuing technical assistance in the construction of various important industrial projects in India, particularly power engineering installations. The USSR had pledged credit for these projects on preferential terms. However, we have learned from circles close to the Indian delegation that the Indian guests were not given a definite answer to this question. Obviously, each project will have to be discussed individually. That will require the appropriate study and time.

Positive Results of Visit

What should we regard as the plus side of the visit? First and foremost, the fact that the sides met, discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, and gained a better understanding of each other's position. They have agreed that a Russian delegation will pay a reciprocal visit to Delhi in February to continue the dialogue. It is important not to waste time. The aim of the visit will be to achieve specific accords and sign agreements, including a protocol on trade for 1992. You get the impression that this aim is perfectly feasible.

During the talks in Moscow the sides outlined a realistic framework for future agreements. The Indian delegation put forward the proposal to retain clearing accounts in rupees as the basic system of transactions for a transitional period of up to two years. Of course, this certainly does not rule out the possibility of concluding deals in freely convertible currency, or barter deals. The problem of our debt to India resulting from current trade operations will have to be resolved during this period. It stood at almost 22 billion rupees (approximately $1 billion dollars) at the end of 1991. This debt is a source of serious concern to India. Our side has to find ways to balance trade, mainly by increasing commodity exports. We are well aware that we cannot live in debt for long. But we have complaints against India too. Since 27 December 1991, the Indian Reserve Bank has essentially blocked supplies of Indian goods to our country. This has been a serious blow—not only to Indian exporters but to all trade.

New Treaty Ahead

Thanks to efforts at the talks, the question of our side supplying combat equipment and the spare parts for it is no longer at a standstill. The Russian Government has spoken in favor of continuing deliveries. However, the terms have yet to be agreed. India is insisting that the practice of credits be continued. We would prefer to receive hard cash, although we would also agree to Indian rupees, which we could spend on goods we need, including food. Our military experts in Delhi believe that at least some combat equipment and spare parts could be supplied to India under barter agreements.

Now to the main result of the visit. In my view it was the agreement to sign a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation Between Russia and India in the near future. I was informed by our embassy in Delhi that the sides have essentially agreed on the text of the treaty. It will be signed during the Russian president's proposed visit to India. Originally, Indian newspapers reported that the visit would take place at the end of March or beginning of April, but there is no strong certainty about this. It is possible that Yeltsin will visit India a little later. However, Delhi does not rule out the possibility that a meeting between the Indian prime minister and Russian president could take place before this—at the UN Security Council session in New York.

Commenting on the results of the Indian delegation's visit to Moscow, the newspaper of the ruling Indian National Congress (I) Party, NATIONAL HERALD, writes: "India has made it clear that its good relations with Russia will continue. For its part, Russia has stressed that it regards its relations with Delhi as one of the priorities of its foreign policy and will continue to attach important significance to them."

Relations between Russia and India are at a crossroads. The quicker we get through this difficult period, the better it will be for our countries' peoples.

Mongolian Diplomat on Prospects for Ties

924C0491A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 23 Jan 92 p 4

[Article by J. Enhsayhan, plenipotentiary minister-counselor of the Mongolian Embassy in the Russian Federation: "Russia and Mongolia: Time for Action: Mongolians Are Demanding That the Statue of Buddha Be Returned to Them"]

[Excerpt] The end of the "cold war," the complete normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Mongolia, and the formation on the vast expanse of the former USSR of the Commonwealth of Independent States are creating a qualitatively new geopolitical situation in Central Asia and in the international arena as a whole.

In this situation Mongolia is revising its foreign policy and its security policy. Rigid allied relations with the USSR and reliance in the assurance of its security solely on one state are now being replaced by a policy of nonalignment, the development of cooperation with all countries, and a strengthening of political and international-legal guarantees of national security on the basis of a balance of interests.

An important component of this new approach to security is good- neighborliness and all-around cooperation primarily with Mongolia's immediate neighbors, that is, with the Russian Federation and China. An integral part of the concept is also a policy of the nondeployment of nuclear weapons and foreign military bases on our territory for purposes hostile to the interests of other countries. This corresponds to the interests of Russia and other countries of the region. In addition, we are aiming at facilitating the creation of a flexible mechanism of dialogue and assurance of a balance of security interests in Northeast and Central Asia and their subsequent organic inclusion in a system of international security.

The Mongolian concept is in the development phase, and its actual content will depend to a considerable extent on the development of the situation in neighboring countries and their relations between them and Mongolia. It is for this reason that it is following particularly closely the tumultuous processes taking place in the former USSR and was one of the first to recognize the new sovereign states, endeavoring to develop its relations with regard for their new status.

An important partner for us is the Russian Federation, with which Mongolia established diplomatic, trade and economic, cultural, and other relations back in 1921, that is, prior to the formation of the USSR. At the start of 1991 these relations were renewed in the Declaration of Friendship and Good-Neighbor Cooperation. The parties renounced the ideologized "special" relations of past years and are switching to normal interstate relations. This transition, unfortunately, is proceeding very slowly as yet. This has been influenced by many factors: the difficulties and particularities of the present transitional period, including the uncertainty over whom to do business with (that is, with the center or the republics directly), the tenacity of the "elder brother" syndromes, Mongolia's one-sided economic dependence on the one hand and the monopolism of many Soviet enterprises and departments on the other, and so forth.

I would like to believe that with the disappearance of the USSR the period of uncertainty has come to an end and an opportunity for the speediest surmounting of these difficulties preventing the renewal of relations and their development in accordance with both parties' fundamental national interests has been afforded. There is a solid basis for this: the traditions of friendship, cooperation, and mutual assistance. The former Soviet Union rendered us considerable assistance in the development of the economy and the training of national personnel and in the defense of the country. On the other hand Mongolia helped the Soviet people to the best of its abilities both during the Great Patriotic War and in peacetime (Chernobyl, the earthquake in Armenia and so forth). For this reason that which is positive which has been accumulated in our relations should not only be protected in every possible way but developed and enriched also.

However, unfortunately, together with the positive aspects in the history of Mongolian-Soviet relations there have also been negative ones requiring thorough investigation and solution. I refer to the role of the NKVD in the extermination in the 1930-40's of the flower of the Mongolian intelligentsia, thousands of Buddhist priests and hundreds of Buddhist monasteries, and the execution of Mongolian leaders, including two prime ministers, in the Soviet Union. We would like to establish who was responsible for the above crimes, find and return to the homeland the magnificent Megdzijanraysig statue of Buddha (28.5 meters high) and other religious-cultural monuments taken from Mongolia in the 1930's, and so forth.

The question of Mongolia's debt to the former Soviet Union, which took shape in the depths of the command-administrative system of management of the two countries as a result of the imperfection of the pricing mechanism, the inefficient use of Soviet credit, and so forth, also remain a heavy "burden" of the past. I believe that these and certain other questions of the past should be resolved as soon as possible with the successor of the former USSR, to which, in accordance with international law, not only its rights but also its obligations are transferred.

Considering the present difficult time for both parties and the need for the solution of many complex questions connected with the transition to new mutual relations (the debt negotiations have been going on for three years and have reached deadlock, and negotiations on other questions have not even started yet), the parties could adopt a political decision—a mutual remission of all "burdens" of the past and the commencement of relations with a tabula rasa, that is, a clean slate. After all, the top-priority tasks in our relations are solutions of complex trade and economic questions (the amount of trade and economic cooperation is declining steeply), for which it is necessary to engage, as the declaration points out, an intergovernmental mixed commission, accelerate the stock-taking of bilateral treaties and agreements (and we have more than 1,000), and jointly devise and sign a new friendship and good-neighbor treaty, which would determine the principles and spheres of our cooperation, contribute to an expansion of direct cooperation between Mongolian aymags and the Russian republics and oblasts, and so forth.

On the international level the unfolding geopolitical reality also demands an exchange of opinions and the elaboration of a mechanism of bilateral consultations on questions of a strengthening of the atmosphere of trust, stability, and security in Central and Northeast Asia. A good start, and you are half-way there, as they say. [passage omitted]

Experts Review IMF Membership Issue

OW3101144992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1339 GMT 31 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Moscow on Friday [31 January] experts conducted a preliminary round of talks on Russia's joining the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF delegation held negotiations with Russia's central bank as well as with government and foreign ministry officials. As IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent learned from Russia's foreign ministry, the two sides clarified their stands on a whole range of problems.

They focused on the legal aspects of issues connected with Russia's IMF membership, and continued the endeavours to fix Russia's quota in the IMF. The experts also discussed the issue of Russia's representation in the IMF's leading bodies.

EC Envoy Silayev Views Economic Prospects

924C0487A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 28 Jan 92 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Ivan Silayev by Aleksandr Krotkov at the RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA editorial offices; date not given: "Ambassador on What Assignments?"]

[Text] **The new appointment of Russia's ex-premier Silayev as representative of the RSFSR at the EEC triggered a great deal of gossip in the country. It was rumored that at the last minute the president had had second thoughts about sending overseas his former associate in the struggle against the Union center. This, it is said, explains the "delay" in Ivan Stepanovich's departure for Brussels. But Silayev needs Brussels, some people were asserting, citing "reliable sources," like a dog needs a fifth leg inasmuch as, at his request, a house had already been purchased in New York.**

Ivan Stepanovich came to our editorial office to talk about his plans for the future himself.

"First as to why I am still in Moscow, not in Brussels," he said. "It has been entirely a question of the time taken to obtain the so-called 'agreement'—a visa for entry into another country. It is usually issued within 45 days, which in my case will have expired by mid-February. So there is still time. My predecessor in this post—Voronin—was registered in 50 days. There is an additional particularity here: all 12 members of the EEC have to give the 'go- ahead' for one's arrival.

"As far as the rumors concerning the house that I have purchased in New York (and they were picked up by your newspaper also, unfortunately) are concerned, they are an invention from start to finish."

[Krotkov] This being the case, we ask forgiveness. Now down to business. Of what will your work in Brussels consist?

[Silayev] Defending Russian interests in the EEC, of course! Between ourselves, work on the Interstate Economic Committee was not the most pleasant. It was not even a question of its nature but of people all the while aiming to accuse one of treachery—Russians, of a betrayal of Russian interests, the inhabitants of other sovereign states, of a betrayal of the interests of the Commonwealth. But here I will be serving Russia alone.

[Krotkov] Well, to be more specific?

[Silayev] To be more specific, the main task is Russia's speediest integration in the West European, world economy. Without this, I am convinced, there will be no macroeconomic reform in our country. There will be none, first, without Western financial assistance. The 500 million ECU [European Currency Unit] which the EEC has agreed to allocate us for the food program and the further 400 million for technical assistance are a lifebelt for the state. A lifebelt for the added reason that millions are noncompensable.

[Krotkov] Some people believe that in setting out for Brussels now you are running the risk of finding yourself in a kind of slow season: the noncompensable assistance has already been allocated, and we are a long way off from serious credit. Judging by the experience of Poland and South Korea, the big investors will come to the country no sooner than two or three years after the start of macroeconomic stabilization. It is said that it could happen that there will simply be nothing for you to do meanwhile in EEC headquarters.

[Silayev] Oh, please. The negotiations on food aid to us began back last summer, and it is beginning to arrive only now. Processes are, in a word, extremely slow. Much effort is required to speed them up and I fear that I will be having to play the part of a fixer here.

In addition, the EEC leadership has serious intentions of allocating us a further 1.25 billion ECU—the same it was contemplated giving the Union of fond memory. Now there will be the unpleasant process of sharing this pie among the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

As far as the prospects of two years from now are concerned, any future is brought closer by today's efforts, and Russia's representatives at the EEC will have their work cut out in persuading West European businessmen to extend credit to our economic undertakings. And inasmuch as credit is given only for specific programs, my participation in their development is inevitable.

[Krotkov] When there is talk of Russia's growth into the European market, the single labor market which is taking shape is somehow frequently forgotten behind the talk about large-scale credit, joint ventures, banks, exchanges, holding companies and other creations of modern society. A recent example: Germany has already agreed to take 11,000 of our workers. On the one hand this is splendid—people will have an opportunity not only to look around in broad daylight but also to earn and learn from the Germans all the best things. But are we not losing little by little in this way our last possession, perhaps—Russians' golden hands? After all, we will not in the next few years be in a position to compete for them with those same Germans, alas. What policy do you intend pursuing in this connection in Brussels?

[Silayev] You are right, this is truly a difficult and ambivalent issue. I, for example, am greatly distressed here by the fact that my compatriots are being invited to a foreign country like cheap manpower from some Uganda or Tanzania. But deciding this question by prohibitive measures is, I fear, impossible.

The solution, I believe, lies elsewhere: spending some of the 400 million ECU which are being allocated Russia as technical assistance for retraining our specialists, workers included.

I will return now to the question of what precisely is holding back Western businessmen from immediate investments in our economy. They are afraid not so much of our ruin (on the contrary, ruin would be to their benefit for it would enable them to buy up entire enterprises in Russia) as that legislative leap-frogging which is thriving in all states of the former Union without exception. After all, you can see what is being done here: foreign economic activity is sometimes liberalized, being unwound entirely, sometimes people suddenly go to the other extreme, turning the tax and customs screws as tightly as they can.

[Krotkov] But in Russia, as far as I know, they have today been loosened....

[Silayev] Please understand that in building its policy in respect of us the West scrutinizes not only Russia. I will explain with an example. A document is being prepared in Belarus currently, as far as I know, in accordance with which 90 percent of all enterprise currency assets may be frozen. Who will, after this, vouch for the fact that tomorrow our Belarussian comrades will not start, as the Bolsheviks once did, to take away everything, break into offices, and "nationalize" what belongs to others?

I give you a further example. Many foreign businessmen were saddened, to put it mildly, by the fact of the bankruptcy of the Union Bank for Foreign Economic Relations, at which hundreds of joint ventures had their accounts. What will happen to these accounts now, God only knows.

So we should not be heaping everything onto our economic weakness—it is by no means a question of just this alone. You know that when we howl to the wide world that unhappy Russia is going down, we are openly derided: you need to have a great gift to actually go to the bottom with such a wealth of resources and with such powerful industrial, specifically, military, potential.

[Krotkov] Ivan Stepanovich, rumors have been circulating in journalist circles of late to the effect that the Russian leadership has been working on a version of a major currency swap like that which has gone down in contemporary history as the "140 billion affair." If these rumors are correct, you, Russia's representative at the EEC, cannot fail to know of such plans. I realize that such things are being kept secret for the time being, nonetheless, lift the veil a little!

[Silayev] Excuse me, I will not. I will say merely that there is absolutely nothing criminal in such transactions. They were performed at the time of realization of the celebrated Marshall Plan which enabled postwar Germany to rapidly pull itself out of poverty and become one of the world's most prosperous countries.

[Krotkov] About prosperity, incidentally. What pay level has been set in Brussels for you personally?

[Silayev] I do not yet know the precise amount. Embassy staff of roughly the same rank receive $1,500 a month. Converted into rubles, this amount gives the impression of a gigantic sum, but you must not forget that life is very expensive in Brussels, and God grant that if only a small sum of money be left over after all expenses.

[Krotkov] Well, we would then organize for you humanitarian assistance from Russia. But now we want you to be economical and by the time of your return to the motherland to have saved on this occasion enough money for the purchase of a home, if not in New York, at least a small candle factory near Samara. But to be serious, the sooner you embark on the fulfillment of your duties in Brussels, the better for all of us. It is necessary, very necessary, that the West's assistance not be late but be injected as an invigorating drug into the Russian reforms.

[Silayev] I believe so too.

[Krotkov] Ivan Stepanovich, with whom in the Russian government will you be deciding matters?

[Silayev] As agreed during a recent comprehensive discussion with Boris Nikolayevich, on matters of principle and long-term projects, with the president of Russia directly. All working aspects, with Vice Premier Yegor Gaydar.

[Krotkov] Are you comfortable with this?

[Silayev] Perfectly.

Bering Strait Region Resolution Facilitated

PM3001150992 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 29 Jan 92 First Edition p 3

["Own Information" report: "Visiting Across the Bering Strait"]

[Text] An intergovernmental agreement on reciprocal visits by inhabitants of the Bering Strait region and on a regional commission on the strait has been signed between the USSR and the United States. To give it specific content, the Russian Government passed a resolution a few days ago speeding up the implementation of the accords reached. Several Russian ministries and the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug administration have been charged with implementing it.

The resolution envisages a broad range of measures to be taken quickly to facilitate contacts among and visits by inhabitants of the Bering Strait region. It is planned, in particular, that an appropriate infrastructure be created to receive cross-border travelers at the seaports of Anadyr and Provideniya, the airport of the settlement of Provideniya, and in the settlements of Uelen and Lavrentiya.

The Bering Strait regional commission on the Soviet side and the inhabitants of Chukotka Autonomous Okrug will receive international telephone links and the opportunity to make use of international postal operations by 1 January 1993. Nor have foreign citizens been forgotten. On the Soviet shore they will enjoy a broad array of services, including foreign currency exchange, communications, medical assistance, and so on.

The Chukotka Autonomous Okrug administration has been instructed to ensure, among other things, the allocation of accomodation for border guard troops manning checkpoints, customs officials, and members of their families.

Tyumen, U.S. Attend Oil Industry Seminar

PM0402143192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 3 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Yuriy Perepletkin: "Americans in Siberia"]

[Text] Tyumen—Tyumen oil workers and representatives of approximately 60 U.S. companies and banks have spent four days face-to-face, disentangling masses of inconsistencies. Officially this meeting was called a seminar-conference on foreign investments in the West Siberian oil and gas complex.

The organizers of the unusual debating school were the administration of Tyumen Oblast, the Siberian Scientific Research Institute of the Oil Industry, and the U.S. Department of Energy.

The position of the oil sector today is critical. At the same time there are still quite a lot of hydrocarbon raw materials in Siberia. Alas, thousands of wells are inoperative owing to the shortage of equipment.

The participation of foreign partners in strengthening the energy complex—naturally, they reckon on a certain guaranteed share of the profits—would help to improve the situation in a short time.

In the end everyone made an unequivocal assessment of the meeting: useful and necessary. The first contracts have already been concluded.

After the completion of the official part of the seminar a group of guests flew to the north to familiarize themselves directly on the spot with the work of oil and gas fields.

Italy Agrees To Unfreeze Credits

PM0302094192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 30 Jan 92 First Edition p 1

[Report from ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA-TASS roundup under the "News" rubric: "Credits Unfrozen"]

[Text] Russia and Italy today exchanged letters making it possible to free the credits granted earlier to the Soviet Union by Italy. The Italian credits were frozen in connection with the uncertainty as to who will repay them following the breakup of the Union. The documents were signed by Petr Aven, chairman of the Russian Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, and Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis.

Basic Trade 'Parameters' Formulated With Cuba

OW0402174492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1609 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Report by diplomatic correspondents Mikhail Mayorov, Igor Porshnev, and "others" from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] There is still no agreement on trade and economic cooperation between Moscow and Havana for 1992, but, as a diplomat specialising on Cuba told our correspondent, complete severing of relations between the two countries was still ruled out.

He said an agreement was being prepared. The sides had formulated what he described as "basic parameters for trade and economic relations between Russia and Cuba", namely mutual benefit, use of world prices, including for oil and sugar, parity and payment in dollars on a clearing basis. As for "specific parameters", these were being formulated in the course of the negotiations which had started in November 1991.

One of the main problems, the diplomat pointed out, was for Russia to appraise its potential. So far "we don't know what kind of goods, and in what quantities, we may be selling to Cuba", the diplomat said.

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Interviewed on Gorbachev, Reform

LD0502213992 Paris TF-1 Television Network in French 1903 GMT 5 Feb 92

["Extensive excerpts" of interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by correspondents Dominique Bromberger and Ulysse Gosset in the Kremlin on 5 February; Yeltsin speaks in Russian with superimposed French translation—recorded]

[Text] [Bromberger] What do you think about Mikhail Gorbachev today? Do you see him from time to time? Do you believe that he is a man who will be in opposition to you one day? Do you wish to renew ties with him?

[Yeltsin] I supported his forming the Gorbachev Foundation, putting at his disposal extensive material resources. I have resolved various problems which he raised, so there has been a civilized changeover of leaders for the first time since 1917. He has promised me he will not concern himself with politics, and I trust him.

[Gosset] Is Mikhail Gorbachev a man of the past? Does he belong to the past? Or does he still have a future?

[Yeltsin] I do not believe that he has a political future, and I stress the word political. [the announcer interrupts at this point to note that the "extensive excerpts" of the Yeltsin interview will continue at the end of the newscast; the newscast is carried 1905-1921 GMT; the interview continues at 1921 GMT]

[Bromberger] Mr. President, hello and thank you for welcoming us here, in these Kremlin apartments which once belonged to the czar; to Mikhail Gorbachev, whom we knew well. We know Boris Yeltsin, perhaps not as well. Please introduce yourself to the French people.

[Yeltsin] You mean my personal traits? The good ones, on the positive side: a down-to-earth man with quite a strong character who is, nevertheless, democratic in human relations; very hard- working; very precise with work. I like politics, which is honest and moral both at the national and international level. I love my family; my two daughters; my two grandaughters; and my grandson, Boris Yeltsin. On the negative side: Sometimes I let myself get a little depressed, above all when life is hard or difficult. I sleep very little—three or four hours a night, now only two hours for the past two days.

[Gosset] You were a Communist Party apparatchik for a very long time, but you broke away one day. Was your conversion sincere? Is it final? Do you really repudiate everything of the Communist past of Boris Yeltsin and of Russia today?

[Yeltsin] We were all raised under this totalitarian Communist regime. We were brainwashed in this ideology from childhood. It is quite normal that my career followed this path of working in the party bodies. However, I was seized by an internal feeling of resistance, of disagreement with the events of the last decades. I began protesting, first internally and then publicly. I began developing for myself the principles which I now advocate. However, I do not regret this; on the contrary, I consider that I have scored a great victory over myself.

[Bromberger] We recently saw you participating in religious ceremonies. Does religious faith now have an impact on you?

[Yeltsin] First, I have not participated in religious ceremonies just recently. It does not happen very often, but I have participated in such ceremonies many times. In general, it is in connection with a religious festival—an important religious festival—in the Russian tradition. I feel that is an internal, spiritual obligation to observe those times, but one should not conclude from this that I am a deep believer. I would not say that.

[Gosset] Do you believe in God?

[Yeltsin] I must be sincere, particularly with regard to God. I cannot say that I believe firmly in God. On the other hand, I am no longer as unreservedly atheistic as previously.

[Bromberger] One of the big pictures the West has of you is of your courage when you were outside the White House on a tank. You then saved the USSR, which was being threatened with a putsch. However, a certain number of people today wonder if after what could have been a real danger to Russia—a military putsch by the most conservative elements—there is not once again today the risk of too authoritarian a regime in the USSR...[changes thought] sorry, in Russia.

[Yeltsin] Naturally, there is a certain level of risk, but not a very high one. If reform fails, then what you say is possible. The conservative elements are still alive, the Red forces rooted in society—they are not very numerous, but united they represent a force, a force which is just waiting for the failure of the reforms, and this is the very reason why the cause of Russian reforms is important to the whole of the international community, including France. When I arrive in France today, I am not going to ask for aid, of course, but I am going to attempt to convince everyone that this reform must be supported in order to avoid failure.

The most difficult period will be in February, March, and April. I will not say that people will die of starvation, but the situation will be very difficult. We need food, and this is one of the most important problems to be resolved.

[Gosset] How long do you think the Russian population will be able to tolerate inflation—running at 500-700 percent per month—and empty shops?

[Yeltsin] If you come to our country, it will be faster—in other words, France...[changes thought] If the international community adopts a more open attitude—because it is a world problem—then we will manage. The most difficult time will be in February, March, and April. I believe the nation shows its support for the president's reforms by tightening its belt.

[Bromberger] You have disappeared on several occasions. You yourself have stressed that you sometimes had small health problems. People have mentioned heart problems. Do you have health problems...

[Yeltsin, interrupting] I have never discussed that.

[Bromberger] No, people have mentioned it.

[Yeltsin] No, excuse me, but I have never discussed that, and I have never had any cardiac problems.

[Bromberger] O.K. Are you prepared to publish an annual or biannual health report, as they do in the West?

[Yeltsin] If you like, we can do that this very day.

[Gosset] You sleep for one or two hours per night at the moment. Are you physically strong enough to face the tasks awaiting you? Do you think that the state of your health will allow you to achieve your goals?

[Yeltsin] Among all the aspects, it is the one which worries me the least. I play tennis for 90 minutes—very hard—twice a week, on Tuesday and Saturday. My partner is very good. I take a cold shower every morning. I feel very good.

[Bromberger] One of the West's big worries is the dismantling of nuclear weapons. It used to be simple—since there was one button, there was a man who would push the button. However, today there is fear that all these weapons which are spread all over, not only in your republic, could be misused. Do you have real control over the former USSR's nuclear weapons?

[Yeltsin] There is no reason to be afraid. There was one button, and there is still one button, a button in the hands of the Russian president. Nobody else can control the strategic nuclear arms. Technically, it is out of the question. We—the four heads of nuclear states—agreed on this matter in writing. I have the button and the other button is in the hands of Marshal Shaposhnikov. Before the button is pushed—may God prevent that happening—the four heads of state should consult each other by telephone to reach a political agreement. Then, it is up to me to act. There is no danger of nuclear weapons being used by anybody else; technically, it is impossible.

[Gosset] You recently said that Russian missiles are no longer targeted on the United States. Toward whom are they targeted now? What purpose do they serve, if any?

[Yeltsin] The joint declaration President Bush and I signed at Camp David clearly states that we are no longer potential enemies but allies, and one does not target its weapons against his allies. Against whom then? Potentially against various adventurists, terrorists, irresponsible politicians in different countries who would wage a war or blackmail the whole world with their nuclear warheads. One should keep a minimum number of deterrent nuclear missiles.

[Bromberger] Until now, you seemed reticent about accepting Western aid—even from France—for destroying nuclear warheads. Does this mean that your position could change on that point?

[Yeltsin] Of course, today we receive and we benefit from all possible investments in this field.

[Gosset] Your trip today is the first trip by a Russian leader since Nicolas II. Does that comparison shock you when one speaks of the time of the tsars?

[Yeltsin] No. Let us not make such comparisons; let us think rather of the fact that since the last century there has not been as important an agreement between Russia and France. Now, toward the end of this century, we will, I think, sign such an agreement. Let us compare acts rather than men. There will be such an agreement for the first time this century. Obviously, this assumes a unique historic importance.

[Bromberger] Your last trip to Paris and Strasbourg dates back to April 1991. Do you really, sincerely have a happy memory of the way you were received by the French authorities then?

[Yeltsin] I do not want to draw too much attention to the past, all the more so as I am going there with another status. I am the president of the Russian Federation, elected by the nation. This is a new visit, an official state visit. From the point of view of protocol, there is no comparison to be made with the other trip to Strasbourg and Paris. I was received last time in accordance with protocol, and I do not feel either uncomfortable or offended.

[Gosset] In Strasbourg, for example, when the president of the Socialist group in the European parliament told you that you could leave if you are unhappy, was that not a memory which made you smart? If you saw him again today, what would you say to him?

[Yeltsin] No, I will not speak about it. I am not a vindictive person.

[Bromberger] Finally, a very personal question: You referred to your character and to the possibility that you might lose your temper one day. If the reforms failed in Russia tomorrow—in particular, if the economic reform did not work—might you lose your temper, bang your fist on the table, and yourself decide to be an authoritarian leader to try to make things progress differently, to be the man who takes charge? Or is that ruled out?

[Yeltsin] First, I did not use the term lose my temper. I did not use those words at all. I have to correct you all the time. I spoke of leaning a bit toward depression from time to time. That is something else. I will not lose my temper or bang my fist on the table. Being authoritarian or dictatorial is ruled out, it is ruled out. I am a democrat all the same.

Yeltsin Decree Adds to Appointment Procedures

PM0502115192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 1 Feb 92 First Edition p 2

["Decree of the President of the Russian Federation on Making Additions to Decree No. 239 of the President of the Russian Federation 'On the Procedure for Appointing Heads of Administration' of 26 November 1991"; decree is dated 27 January 1992]

[Text] The following Section 4 is to be added to Paragraph 4 of Decree No. 239 of the President of the RSFSR

"On the Procedure for Appointing Heads of Administration" of 26 November 1991:

Pending the appointment of a head of administration, the acting head exercises in full the powers of the head of administration of the relevant level, including the appointment of heads of administration of rayons and cities under kray, oblast, and okrug jurisdiction, which is to be carried out by agreement with representatives of the president of the RSFSR.

[signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation
The Kremlin, Moscow
27 January 1992

Decree No. 53

Rutskoy, Khasbulatov 'Sharply' Criticized

OW0502204192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1908 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Industry Minister Aleksandr Titkin has sharply criticized Vice-President Aleksandr Rutskoy and speaker of the parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov. He said at the government's meeting in November, 1991, Rutskoy "had been speaking in favor of price liberalization louder than others". Titkin called the latest report by Rutskoy where he expressed doubts about price liberalization "a treachery".

The minister noted that Khasbulatov as head of the parliament is more responsible for the present situation than those members of the government who do not enter the parliament. "There is no confrontation between the government and the parliament, there is confrontation between Khasbulatov and the government," he said. Titkin explained that part of the political leadership wants to deviate from the jointly worked out policy.

Shakhray Rejects Charge of State of Emergency

LD0502141592 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Feb 92 pp 1,3

[Mikhail Karpov article under the "Government" rubric and the general heading: "'Government Ready for Anything,' Sergey Shakhray, Russian Vice Premier and State Counselor, Said Evasively in Response to NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA Correspondent's Question: Is the Government Ready for Red-Brown March Through Moscow?"]

[Text] He [S. Shakhray, Russian vice premier] confirmed nevertheless the government's confidence in the correctness of its chosen course that another vice premier, Yegor Gaydar, proclaimed at his 3 February news conference. The government is not forcing events. Even the postponement of the traditional Thursday government session from last week to this Tuesday indicates this. Certainly this session's agenda, as summarized by Shakhray, convinces you of that. The government examined highly diverse issues, but they were all linked with the foreign-policy aspect of the Russian state's activity.

Of course, one can discern in all this the inveterate inclinations of the leaders of the former USSR, whose successor the Russian Federation has become by right and even by custom. However, I think that is wrong. Shakhray utterly rejected a piece of conjecture that has become popular—albeit among a limited audience—that Burbulis and Poltoranin are determined to use the Red and the Brown attempt to "Tbilisi-ize" Moscow with their march in order to introduce an eight-month state of emergency. The vice premier and the state counselor dealt with the question extremely simply, asking a question of their own in return: "How can that be done?"

Continuing the polemics with the press, Shakhray even suggested his own headline for an article on Russia's newly created main political directorate—"How Shakhray Was Transferred From a Detention Room [KPZ] to a Main Political Directorate," referring to his former post on the Committee for Questions of Legislation.

If we take the vice premier and state counselor's humor for what it is, we must, I think, nonetheless acknowledge him to be right in saying that Russia's internal and even economic position is indissolubly linked with its relations with the outside world. Especially since these relations are expanding all the time at the moment. Thus, for instance, questions of the troop withdrawals from Germany, Poland, and other countries have been joined by equally topical questions—the troop withdrawal from the Baltic states. Shakhray has tackled them in his capacity as Russian delegation head and he thinks, apparently not without foundation, that this problem is as important for the resolution of Russian problems as price liberalization or privatization, in which spheres the Russian Government is upbraided so often for its policy.

Internal Affairs Ministry Appointments Made

PM0502113192 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 1 Feb 92 p 2

["Own Information" report: "Professionals in the Minister's Team"]

[Text] We have learned that the first appointments have been made in the Russian Federation Ministry of Internal Affairs, which has been the focus of such a flurry of emotions.

They demonstrate unequivocally that the Union structures have been finally absorbed by the Russian department's structures. At least, practically all the top people, starting with Minister Viktor Yerin, have come from 6 Ogarevo Street since August.

Both first deputies have been appointed—they are Generals Yevgeniy Abramov and Andrey Dunayev. General Petr Mishchenkov will take charge of correctional labor institutions, General Vitaliy Turbin will handle cadres, General Igor Kozhevnikov will take charge of investigations, General Vladimir Strashko will run rear services, and General Aleksandr Kulikov will be in charge of public order services.

A cursory analysis suggests that for the first time a Russian internal affairs minister has assembled a team made up entirely of professionals.

Further on Independent Farm Congress

Further on Khasbulatov Speech

PM0602125592 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 4 Feb 92 First Edition p 1

[Report from ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA, TASS roundup: "It Is Necessary To Support Kolkhozes"]

[Text] Although the question of developing private farms has long since "ceased being topical," the state is not ready to resolve it in an efficient manner, Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov said at the third congress of Russian private farmers, 40 percent of land provided for the private farmers' use is not at present being used for purely objective reasons. There is no equipment or fertilizers, and great difficulties are arising in connection with the sale of produce.

In his speech, Ruslan Khasbulatov placed emphasis on the inadmissibility of whipping up enmity between the private farmers and kolkhoz and sovkhoz leaders. On the contrary, he considers that it is necessary to support the kolkhozes as only they can now feed the population.

Burbulis Addresses Congress

LD0602021792 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1750 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] Moscow, 5 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy prime minister of the Russian Federation, addressed delegates to the Third Congress of the Association of Peasant (Farmer) holdings and agricultural cooperatives, which eneded in Moscow today. On Boris Yeltsin's behalf he welcomed those assembled and thanked them for their work, courage and patience.

In order to get a more precise understanding of what hampers the farmers' movement in Russia the fumdamental question should be asked from time to time: in what way are the positions of Russians being polarized today regarding our main goals?

In the view of the first deputy prime minister, there are three positions in evidence. First, there are all those who have united in a vitally important and urgent matter: that of giving Russians real economic freedom and ahieving a full-blooded Russian revival. This is a position of radical reform in the framework of the laws and via observance of all the rules and laws of human society.

The second position is reform as understood by the nomenklatura. There are all those who have realized that the old system can no longer be preserved and that they have to weave and adjust, but it is best to do it in a way that hampers the essence of reforms and to manage during this period to profit from things a bit on one's own account. I refer to all those who grew up in the repressive Communist economic system and still believe that they will manage to get rich and turn in a profit at our expense once again.

There is also a third position. Many people in our Russian Federation are sincerely convinced that we are wrong to embark on this undertaking and that all that is needed is to slightly adjust our socialist rules and norms, to place honest and good-natured people where administration is carried on and power is exercised.

One may sympathize with them, but we cannot fail to reckon with that position.

And there is, in fact, a fourth position. Such people can be regarded as national Bolsheviks. They are those who are still sure that one can make people happier through violence, by some people oppressing others, arranging everything in order of size, controlling everyone by command, and distributing everything for everyone as the highest strata and authorities think fit.

The first deputy prime minister said the government of reforms headed by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin would never resign, only because the cause we are dealing with together is a vital cause for Russia and only because we can see how keenly Russians are already participating in this cause. Our confidence in its practical implementation is growing.

The speaker dwelt upon certain fundamental issues which had been discussed at the congress and formulated his position. One of these issues was the following: Will the current government become, at last, a government which will be able to ensure the observance of laws, the implementation of presidential decrees and the protection of the norms, provisions and rules which they contain? For many long years we have suffered from abuse of power.

However regrettably this may be, today one can justifiably reproach us, the government, with an insufficient use of power. This is a case when we are absolutely confident in the correctness of our strategy, understand our tactical specific actions increasingly more precisely and are prepared to correct the points about which life itself shows how to introduce the necessary corrections. Today the government is transferring a major part of its activity to territories, regions, collectives and enterprises, to places where the direct advance of reforms is taking place.

We believe that in this respect the Association of Peasant Holdings and Cooperatives of Russia, being an organization which already fears nothing and nobody, an organization which is aware of its value, an organization which cannot be thrown off its track by any reshuffles within the Russian leadership, could help us greatly.

All activity connected, in the first place, with the elucidation of laws, and, in the second place, with their unconditional execution, is becoming one of the main directions of our joint work with the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], the tax inspection bodies and all branch ministries and departments.

Three categories of private farmers exist today, the speaker went on. There are those we can describe as farmers with long experience. There are those who, on hearing the call: "Come back, Russian peasant, to the land which is waiting for you", began this business. Today they need their own kind of legal protection. They have, in many ways, set about their job, having their own laws and their own norms, and every time a new document finds its way into their hands today they find themselves dependent on it.

There is even a proposal from your congress, to envisage a certain legal act which would protect private farmers with long experience from this instability and from these legal innovations of all sorts and would guarantee a future. This is a most important matter.

The second category is those who are in the first stage and might withdraw to the sidelines, for some reason. We believe that this category of private farmer also needs certain specific arrangements from the point of view of taxes, of rights within the nearest soviet or administration, and of material provision. There also exists a particular need for legal support for private farmers who are starting up. The majority of them are today suffering from arbitrary whims, mostly those of local authorities.

The speaker cited a most curious document signed by [Vasiliy] Dyakonov, head of administration in Krasnodar Kray. On 15 January, he issued a resolution making fundamental alterations to presidential decrees and government resolutions. The speaker promised to look into the matter personally and asked that all heads of administration be told that those who abuse their power will be punished strictly and severely.

Second, when we think about where one of the most serious shortcomings in our government's work lies, we realize that it is in the absence of a systematic approach to information and propaganda, to explaining the content of our reforms.

I can even admit something to you. We are sometimes egged on and told: "Yegor Timurovich [Gaydar], Gennadiy Eduardovich [Burbulis], why do you soft-pedal so much? When there are reforms on such a scale, when a social system is being altered, when people's way of life is changing, and when new economic relations are being created, you cannot get by without a ministry of propaganda. You must realize that this does not mean ideological brainwashing, but it is the need that people have at local level to know what is going on and, even while you are drawing up the full document, the need to help people to grasp what it is all about."

What is proposed? The speaker said that television's "Rural Hour" should be kept. But that program is not enough. In the speaker's view, the second Russian channel needed a program whose essence could be expressed in the words, "Revival of the Russian Peasant", the program must depict farmers' experience juxtaposed with the way farmers work in the West, with some historical examples, and a study of they way our ancestors did it. It is now planned to turn the fourth channel into an educational channel.

It is possible to write entire training courses on farming. The first deputy prime minister suggested that on the basis of the Ministry of Agriculture and the agrarian committee an agreement be concluded with the Association of Peasant Holdings and Cooperatives of Russia, which will provide for an entire range of rules, obligations and certain procedures connected with the monitoring of their observation, permanent forms of relations between that organization and the government, because it is very important that those who take part in the elaboration of a decree or a decision considered for adoption are people to whom they apply. The government must make permanent adjustments to keep up-to-date with real life. What would be the most important thing for us is your participation in that vital course of reforms on which the future of reform will depend. The speaker suggested that the agreement should take into account certain rules and pledges on the taxation system, on various forms of material supply and diverse forms of support and maintenance of government if it finds itself in various crisis situations. What is the point of shying away from this?

I do not want to be ashamed of the fact that we are in need of support today, but when some trade unions formulate relations with us in such a way that they "protect the interests of the working people of Russia, while the government ignores these interests", we would like to say at the top of our voices: "It is time to stop jerking the Russian working people around". The most fundamental interest of the Russian today is to create a free, full-blooded Russian entrepreneur, acting within the framework of the law, from the ruins of a corrupt and expending economy which has oppressed millions and millions of people. In conclusion the first deputy prime minister said: In his time P. A. Stolypin, when replying to opponents, uttered the following words at one of the sessions of the State Duma: "Gentlemen, you need great shocks, but we need a great Russia". Rephrasing this somewhat, you and I might say to our opponents, big and small, today: "Gentlemen, you need endless talk about reforms, but we need specific deeds for the good of a Russia undergoing revival."

Privatization in 'Critical' State

OW0602004392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1908 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A congress of Russian farmers that closed in Moscow on Wednesday [5 February] described the current state of the movement from collective to individual farming as "critical." Local governments were opposed to the split up of collective farms, said the farmers, and independent farmers needed efficient support measures.

The congress urged the Russian government to give peasants soft loans, exempt them from value-added tax, set up a network of specialized farming banks and to authorize the Association of Farms and Agricultural Cooperatives to give farmers licenses to export their products. The congress demanded exemption from military service for farmers' sons and that farmers be authorized to keep guns to protect their property.

The association plans to sign an agreement with the government during the next 10 days to ensure state support for independent farmers and harmonize the parties' steps to hold the land reform.

Former KGB Branch Denies CPSU Funds Knowledge

PM0402164092 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 1

[S. Sokolov, S. Pluzhnikov report: "The Intelligence Service's Silence Is Golden for the Party"]

[Text] Parliamentary hearings on the role of the repressive organs of the former USSR in the events of 19-21 August begin in the White House today.

The KGB's heirs will be paying the debts of that vast organization for a long time to come. One such debt, in the literal sense of the word, amounts to an astronomical sum. That is the participation of various KGB directorates (mainly intelligence and counterintelligence) in diverting CPSU funds abroad.

On 22 January our newspaper published a detailed account by L. Veselovskiy, staffer of the KGB First Main Directorate, who, in accordance with his department's mission, was assigned to the CPSU Central Committee to organize the underground party economy.

On the basis of these and other materials the parliamentary commission came to the conclusion that a significant proportion of information on the CPSU Central Committee's financial operations abroad is concentrated in the archives of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service [FIS] (the former KGB First Main Directorate) and is secret to this day.

The reaction of the FIS was predictable, but we had not expected the denial to be so categorical: "There are no materials on CPSU resources in the foreign intelligence archives." The FIS leader's press secretary told RIA's correspondent that Yevgeniy Primakov is "perplexed." His perplexity was prompted by the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA report that "investigators from the Russian prosecutor's office were not allowed to study FIS archive materials on the CPSU's foreign economic activity. Nobody put such a request to the FIS..."

This turn of events itself caused some perplexity both to the parliamentary commission and to the Russian Federation Prosecutor's Office investigations group.

"The fact is that the leaders of the investigations group have twice sent official requests to the FIS for access to all the necessary materials. The answer is known. Yet the investigation knows very well that it is impossible that there are no documents in the FIS archives showing specifically how the Politburo's instructions were carried out, in what accounts money was kept, in what countries, and who controls them now," we were told by People's Deputy Aleksey Surkov, member of the parliamentary commission. "The investigation materials contain concrete references to the archives of the former First Main Directorate indicating the numbers of files, volumes, and pages."

It is rather ridiculous for us to remind the foreign intelligence leadership that there were at the First Main Directorate 10 whole departments responsible for the CPSU's financial affairs in various parts of the world. For instance, Department 158 was responsible for Latin America. We could also remind them of the countless receipts for money received from the CPSU by communist leaders in various countries. All these receipts are accompanied by special letters from the KGB. The $2 million that was found which for some reason was not handed over to Gus Hall, secretary of the Communist Party of the United States, and the information revealed on the $3 million in India left over from the election campaign of a certain candidate who was "pleasing" to the USSR, provide indirect evidence that the former First Main Directorate, and now the FIS, were well informed about many other such actions. It is also known that the FIS carried out an internal audit of this whole area.

Nonetheless Ye. Primakov's press secretary stated: "If parliament had adopted a decision to search for the relevant materials and had sent competent people, no objections would have arisen." It will doubtless be quite easy for the parliamentarians to adopt such a decision. But will that put an end to the game of hide-and-seek that the CIS leadership is so ingenuously playing with the Russian parliament and prosecutor's office?

Information Minister on Merger, New Agency

LD0502190992 Moscow TASS in English 1739 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Tamara Zamyatinal]

[Text] Moscow February 5 ITAR-TASS—Mikhail Poltoranin, Russia's minister of the press and information, regards the ITAR-TASS abbreviation, which came into being at the beginning of this month, as signifying a merger of two agencies.

ITAR is the state Information Telegraph Agency of Russia while TASS is a joint-stock agency, of which the republics of the former Soviet Union, which are interested in maintaining a single information space, may become founders.

Speaking today at a meeting with the personnel of the RIA-Novosti Agency, part of which is assigned to ITAR in accordance with the Russian president's decree, Poltoranin said that a number of republics of the former Soviet Union had already agreed to cooperate with TASS on such terms.

The minister emphasised that the establishment of ITAR-TASS is not the monopolisation of news-gathering business, since the RIA joint-stock agency will continue to exist.

In addition, a state-run International Information Agency (MIA) will be established on the basis of part of the former Novosti press agency (which is now the RIA-Novosti) which has not been turned over to ITAR.

The news agency MIA will cover economic developments on the territory of Russia for foreign subscribers.

The correspondents' offices of TASS and the former Novosti press agency will merge to cater for ITAR-TASS, those present at the meeting were told.

Staff members of the RIA-Novosti, the minister said, have the right to choose among the ITAR-TASS or MIA state agencies or the RIA joint-stock company. Their future will be decided by a qualification commission. However, this procedure does not apparently promises radiant prospects for many a journalist.

Out of more than 3,000 staff members of the RIA-Novosti, only 700-800 may be admitted to the RIA, 300-500 people can joint the MIA international information agency while the size of the ITAR-TASS, employing more than 4,000 people, will not be larger than it is now.

The question of an ITAR-TASS chief still remains open. The TASS personnel of many thousands would like to see their incumbent General Director Vitaliy Ignatenko in this capacity. His name is on the candidacies' list submitted to the president. The list mentions several candidacies.

The minister said today that a general director would be appointed shortly.

PRAVDA Issues 'SOS' for Financial Help

PM0602095992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 3 Feb 92 p 1

[Unattributed article: "We Cannot Live Without Each Other"]

[Text] PRAVDA will not be on sale at Russian kiosks today and 8 February. Alternative structures for the distribution of central newspapers are being set up throughout Russian territory. Economic pressure could stifle the newspaper. While thanking our readers for their contributions to the PRAVDA support fund, we are again forced to send out an SOS message: WE ARE APPEALING TO LABOR COLLECTIVES, NEW COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES, AND TO NATIONAL AND FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS AND FUNDS TO HELP THE OLDEST NEWSPAPER IN rUSSIA AND THE CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States].

REMEMBER OUR ACCOUNT NUMBERS:

for ruble contributions—000608901 at the Kirovskiy branch of the Prombank [expansion unknown] in Moscow;

for foreign currency—Ditta "Lara." Conto corrente 3009, Cassa di Risparmio di Savona. Agenzia di Varazze. 17019 Varazze. (Sv). Italia.

Kryuchkov Protests Innocence in 'Bugging'

PM0502124192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Feb 92 First Edition p 4

[Andrey Zhdankin report: "Kryuchkov Issues Threat From Behind Bars"]

[Text] There has been a surprise development in the case of the State Committee for the State of Emergency. Since last August many politicians and journalists have really been going to town over the putsch and the conspirators' "deeds." Many details about the putsch have surfaced and there have been different versions which sometimes turn into allegations, and that is quite a different matter. The people in question may feel aggrieved and demand that their honor and dignity be protected. In a state which at the moment is still not based very much on the rule of law, even people accused of serious crimes are worried about their honor and dignity.

The first of theose implicated in the putsch case and confined in Matrosskaya Tishina to decide to exercise this right is former KGB Chief Vladimir Kryuchkov. On 24 January he petitioned the Russian Prosecutor's Office asking that the following document be sent to Russian Television:

"Between 1920 hours and 2015 hours on 22 December 1991, Russian Television showed a program featuring part seven of the British TV series 'The Second Russian Revolution.' This program showed clips from interviews with M.S. Gorbachev and N.A. Nazarbayev. The latter claim that on 29-30 July 1991 I, V.A. Kryuchkov (and Yu.S. Plekhanov), had their conversations with B.N. Yeltsin at Novo-Ogarevo bugged. I hereby state that this allegation is utterly ludicrous. It is no coincidence that even during the investigation into the 'case of the State Committee for the State of Emergency,' the alleged 'bugging' has not been imputed to me.

"I do not know the basis for this statement by Gorbachev and Nazarbayev. Perhaps they were misled. I would like the full text of my letter to be read out to viewers on Russian Television at the same time—between 1930 hours and 2015 hours on Sunday.

"If you refuse to allow this, or reduce the text and thus distort its meaning, I will file a complaint under Article 7 of the RSFSR Civil Code which will be defended by Yu.P. Ivanov, my lawyer in this case.

"I would ask you to inform me of the decision that is made."

According to the editorial office's information, senior officials of the Prosecutor's Office have told Kryuchkov that his request will be granted. Unless there is a rebuttal after one month, Kryuchkov will "sue" the guilty parties—Russian Television, the former president of the Union, and the present president of Kazakhstan. The confrontation could be interesting. The only question is why Vladimir Aleksandrovich does not file a suit against the makers of the film?

Defense Counselor Advocates Own Armed Forces

MK0602082092 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Feb 92 p 2

[Article by Army General K. Kobets, Russian Federation state counselor for defense, under the "Army" rubric: "Priorities of Russia's Military Policy. State Interests Must Be Protected, by Force or by the Possibility of the Use of Force"]

[Text] Officers' alarm over their future has reached extreme limits, and uncontrollable processes could begin in the future, above all in troop units stationed in crisis regions. So, it is time for the republics to concern themselves with the Army's problems—if not out of humanitarian, then out of purely pragmatic considerations—and, following the Ukrainian example, adopt legislative acts regarding political, socioeconomic, and personal rights and freedoms for servicemen and members of their family. The "politicization" of officers, in simplified terms, begins with concern for their families.

The timeframe and scale of housing construction programs for servicemen are unsatisfactory and, whereas at the beginning of 1991 we spoke of 190,000 men without apartments, there are now 240,000. More investment is needed, despite the tight budget. Food supplies for officers' families are considerably worse in most cases than for the country at large. It is not clear who will pay pensions—and with what—to officers discharged into the reserve on the territory of the former Baltic and Transcaucasus republics and how pensions will be indexed. The uncertain future facing military college students casts doubts on the very possibility of forming a full-fledged officer corps—the army's future.

The second oath now on offer constitutes a profanation of the very idea of an oath as an exceptional act binding a man with legal and moral commitments for the rest of his life. Swearing two oaths means setting a precedent that deprives the oath of any meaning: If he can swear a second oath, an officer will swear a fourth or a fifth without any trepidation. That is not only immoral, but also dangerous in terms of its political consequences. Certainly, most officers think of themselves as "Union men" [soyuzniki], each has something of the Alksnis in him, and we have to contend with the inertia of their perception, the fact that they have spent their whole life serving their homeland—the USSR—and have now found themselves serving in the army of a nonexistent state. It will take time to understand the irreversibility of the processes that resulted in the elimination of the Soviet Union, and the military should not be presented as potential putschists.

Military Doctrine: Commonwealth or Russia?

The military doctrine of every state includes notions of the nature of a potential war and the probable adversaries. Can we really rule out the possibility of a war between members of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]? A war is in fact already under way—between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The geopolitical position of every CIS state is extremely different, each state has its own neighbors and its own external threats. So it is possible to imagine a CIS military doctrine, but it will be something irrational. And without a military doctrine and strategic plans based on it, joint armed forces are only appropriate at parades or in agricultural work. Certainly, unified armed forces are no panacea against interethnic conflicts: We have before us the example of Yugoslavia. The unified Yugoslav Army has ended up not so much a stabilizing factor as a divisive force that has escaped society's control as a result.

Therefore we must say in all honesty and certainty that Russia has its own state interests and that it will defend them by force or by the possibility of using force. On this premise we must formulate a military doctrine and create a Russian army. The course chosen by President Yeltsin—of not forcing this process or running ahead of our neighbors—is politically correct, but it is necessary to make thorough preparations today, while the foreign-policy situation is dynamic and unpredictable and—this is the main point—hard to control.

The Russian Armed Forces' strategic tasks must be to ensure Russia's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the inviolability of its borders. Political and regional (border) stability can only be ensured by federal armed forces sufficient for political deterrence and for vigorous defense operations in strategic areas simultaneously—forces capable of inflicting unacceptable damage on a likely aggressor and possessing a supreme degree of combat readiness and mobility.

Russia's defense against a nonnuclear offensive will most likely be planned without massive strikes against enemy population centers and environmentally dangerous installations and without carrying the combat contact point [boyevoye soprikosnoveniye] to its territory.

Russia's land borders are quite unique: In addition to China, Mongolia, Finland, and Norway, its neighbors are the former Union republics—now sovereign states. In conjunction with the countries of Eastern Europe they form a kind of buffer zone in the West and East that objectively reduces the mutual military danger for those who considered one another the "likely adversary" for many years.

What is more, in forming an army Russia will be forced to act not so much on the basis of its real defense requirements as on the basis of the economy's extremely limited potential over the next few years.

Military spending must also become "civilized" in Russia.

Obviously Russia's might will increase with its spiritual, intellectual, and economic revival rather than with a strong army looming over "near neighbors" [blizneye zarubezhye], an army capable of the guaranteed destruction of forces of aggression belonging to "remote adversaries."

What is more, overmilitarization of the economy, politics, and people's awareness paralyzes the mechanism for society's self- development and produces stagnation, degeneration, and collapse. The proportion of GNP channeled into "defense' is a kind of indirect index of a state's totalitarianism. For all that this method of calculation has its faults, this indicator was 15-17 percent in the Soviet Union over the last few years. For comparison's sake in the United States, Britain, the FRG, France, Iraq, the DPRK, and Libya respectively the figures were 5.7 percent, 4.7 percent, 3.2 percent, 4 percent, 32 percent, 24 percent, and 11.1 percent respectively. I think that 4-6 percent of GNP will be the optimum figure for Russia's military budget in the foreseeable future.

Military specialists also use another approach to defining defense needs—the numerical strength of the armed forces as a percentage of the population. In civilized countries this coefficient is 0.6-0.7 percent on average and has a marked tendency to drop (recently it was set at 1.35 for the USSR, that is, double the "natural" requirements). If we are also guided by this, the size of the Russian Army should not exceed 1 million servicemen in peacetime.

The CIS Armed Forces General Staff in conjunction with military research centers could be entrusted with formulating proposals on Russia's military doctrine and a military reform program. There are enough competent specialists there and that solution would be quite justified were it not politically ambiguous. Russia's lack of its own military department and other defense structures gives the impression that its leaders view the former Union Defense Ministry and General Staff as their own, Russian structures and only nominally belonging to the Commonwealth.

That is why the state structures need a committee for Military Policy and Reform. After all, it is simply not practicable for questions of funding military development, military doctrine, etc to be decided via the Commonwealth, on the principle of consensus, moreover.

The Maze of Military Reform

Historical experience shows that all military reforms in Russia have started from defeats among the troops or wide-ranging sociopolitical upheaval. The Crimean war, the war against Japan early this century, the first revolution, World War I, the Civil War, and, last, the Afghan war and the collapse of the Union are all similar events. This experience illustrates that the effectiveness of reforms is directly dependent on how interested armed forces personnel are in serving.

If we assess what the Union Defense Ministry has done over the last two or three years we can say, sadly, that there was only a pretense of reform, the army's problems were not resolved, and radical transformations were supplanted by palliative, if not cosmetic changes. It was not the military department alone that was to blame for this. It was unable to plan reform before clarifying once and for all the results of the postperestroyka processes on the ruins of the USSR. A considerable share of the blame lies with the numerous parliaments and presidents who have delayed the creation of a legal base for military development. There is another complication now—the transitional period rules out the possibility of Russia, say, unilaterally implementing reform. Bilateral (and multilateral) talks have begun. Needless to say, we do not harbor any particular illusions as to their results, but we will display self-possession, patience, and persistence. Nor do we rule out UN and NATO representatives' being involved in these talks as experts or even mediators.

I think that a moratorium could be established for this period on the republics' adopting unilateral decisions on the army, and there could be a return to the situation as of the beginning of 1992. It is not very likely that all leaders without exception will easily agree to this, however we must make every attempt to convince them of the danger of unilateral actions. After all, it is only after we have decided the status of the entire vast army set-up [armeyskoye khozyaystvo] that we have inherited from the USSR and stabilized the situation within the troops that there can be any question of transforming unified armed forces into national and joint armed forces.

Last, the question of army funding and supplies (food, fuels and lubricants, etc) during the transitional period should be resolved forthwith on a joint basis, irrespective of the territorial demarcation of units and responsibility for improper implementation of commitments. These are conditions that still leave some hope of military reform within the CIS framework.

A single military-strategic area may be relatively stable if all members of the CIS take part in forming this area. Incidentally, the semantics of the word "joint" [obyedinyennyy] presupposes that states "join" their armed forces together within the CIS framework " rather than the troop units of a now nonexistent state. Any other scenario would not strengthen but destroy interstate stability. Here is a typical example: Armenia is joining the defensive alliance and refraining from forming its own armed forces at a time when Azerbaijan is "nationalizing" Transcaucasus Military District units on its territory and forming an army. Obviously, all other members of the CIS party to the defensive alliance or involved in setting up the joint armed forces will be drawn into the conflict between these two legally sovereign states in one way or another.

B. Yeltsin's decision to put under Russian jurisdiction troops deployed outside the CIS (the Western Group of Forces, the Northern Group of Forces, the Northwest Group of Forces, Georgia, and so on) was undoubtedly as inevitable as it was forced. However, in removing some problems this is creating others. Russia does not have another mechanism enabling it to supply and operationally control these troops aside from the former Defense Ministry and the General Staff that the Commonwealth has inherited from the USSR. The implication being that until they are reformed they will temporarily act as CIS military structures. But in this case this decision puts them under the jurisdiction of the Russian president and is generating legitimate concern among the other members of the Commonwealth.

The consistent position espoused by N. Nazarbayev, who is pressing for the unified army to be preserved, deserves respect. However, his ideas on a common defense area fit in with a federal state rather than an international-legal formation like the CIS. Moreover, if Russia succeeds in retaining special relations in the defense sphere with Kazakhstan, this will strengthen Russian immunity to the expansion of Islamic fundamentalism from certain temperamental southern states.

These comments do not claim to be incontrovertible in their assessments and conclusions. They may not seem sufficiently well-reasoned in all respects. It is a pity to waste time proving the obvious and trying to persuade people who are incapable of accepting the new realities. It is said that we should follow those who seek the truth and flee from those who have found it. But the debate on the army's future and the quest for truth have entered a phase where it is finally time for the state authorities to listen to us military specialists. It is time to determine our position and start military reform with the legislative formulation of a Russian Army.

Government Prepared To Establish Armed Forces

OW0502171392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By Mikhail Mayorov, Igor Porshnev, and "other" from the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature—transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A draft decree establishing Russia's own armed forces has been on Boris Yeltsin's table for some time, DP's [Diplomatic Panorama] correspondent has learned from reliable military sources who added that "all necessary documents have already been prepared". The Russian leadership intends to go it alone only if joint armed forces of the Commonwealth proved impossible to create. The issue is expected to be sorted out at a Minsk summit scheduled for February 14 which is planned to concentrate on military matters.

Russia advocates joint armed forces for the Commonwealth but only Kazakhstan is lending its support to the idea. In case Russia does not set up its own armed forces, it will take over forces deployed in such states as Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The Russian armed forces are to be under command of the republic's defense ministry which is being planned to incorporate appropriate departments of the former Soviet Union.

Colonel Urges Social Spending for Servicemen

LD0602054192 Moscow TASS in English 1354 GMT 4 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Roman Zadunaiskiy]

[Text] Moscow February 4 (TASS)—Colonel Aleksandr Maksimov, chairman of the Servicemen's Independent Trade Union, believes funds released from slashing the military budget and armaments should go to solve social problems faced by servicemen.

In an ITAR-TASS interview, Maksimov pointed out conditions for boosting the servicemen's social protection have emerged in conjunction with Russian President Boris Yeltsin's statement on the republic's policy in the field of arms limitation and reduction.

Maksimov emphasised measures for the social protection of servicemen should be implemented immediately. According to figures provided by the independent trade union's sociological service, one in five officer's families (one in three officer's families among troops which are being pulled out of foreign countries) is forced to live apart from one another due to housing problems.

Servicemen did not receive 40,000 apartments in Russia in 1990 due to the failure to implement the housing programme. The housing shortfall amounted to over 30,000 square meters for the Army in 1991 as a whole. Upwards of 100,000 officers from among troops which are being withdrawn from abroad do not have apartments on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

In addition, more than 200,000 children of servicemen need to be allotted places in pre-school children's establishments, which are also only on planning stage. A mere 3.5 billion roubles, which make up 3.4 percent of the military budget, were set aside for the construction of housing for servicemen in 1991.

Reorganization of Nuclear Ministries Viewed

924P0063A Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 31 Jan 92 p 1

[Article by Yevgeniy Panov: "A New Corporation?"]

[Text] A lengthy conference in the Kremlin chaired by President Boris Yeltsin has resolved to transform the USSR Minatomenergoprom [Ministry of Atomic Power and Industry] into the Ministry of Atomic Power and Industry of the Russian Federation.

Thus, yet another ministry has appeared in Russia. However, I for one am not disturbed by this. The entire extensive set of issues associated with the production and use of fissionable materials, the construction and operation of nuclear power stations—in short, everything associated with peaceful and military uses of the atom should be controlled by the state. Both the menacing specifics of the sector and the rules adopted by the international community, particularly the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, bind us to do so.

For 40 years the uranium problem in the USSR was handled by Minsredmash [Ministry of Medium Machine Building] on behalf of the state, and subsequently by Minatomenergoprom. Actually it exists to this day. Legally, it does not. Since there is no Union, the Union structures do not exist either. In some areas their disappearance went unnoticed; in some instances, they die off almost painlessly and it is not important whether they expire a month sooner or a month later. One cannot lose sight of nuclear affairs even for a single day. Within a mere two months our nuclear physicists have managed to turn into a worldwide problem. (Even if strongly exaggerated: In addition to brains, incredibly expensive technologies are needed to create the bomb; industry is needed, which develops on fertile, cultured soils rather than in the deserts of totalitarianism.) However, in this case it would be better to exaggerate the danger. After all, lack of control, confusion, and disintegration are its main sources.

Minsredmash was a research and production empire. Such empires are not to be dismantled. Would it occur to anyone to destroy Siemens, Mitsubishi, or General Electric? On the contrary, they are reinforced because they are the foundation of the might of states. The organizational disintegration of Minsredmash has now been stopped. As I see it, it should have been done sooner because universal decay has affected the nuclear complex too. It is not manifested only through the brain drain which the whole world is trumpeting. In private conversations, employees of the sector evaluate the condition of the power and construction complexes as critical. If the construction of nuclear power stations is to be resumed, it will happen no sooner than the beginning of the next millennium.

This is why, I repeat, the appearance of yet another Russian ministry does not frighten me. A ministry is not good or bad in and of itself. The functions entrusted to it make the difference. Undoubtedly Minsredmash is mightier than such giant corporations as Siemens, Mitsubishi, and General Electric. However, Siemens was a purely economic structure under the kaiser and under the fuehrer, and it remains such at present. As any Soviet ministry, Minsredmash was an organ of state, or rather political management. It operated in an environment of the primacy of politics over economics (and common sense in general), and it never was a purely economic structure. Nonetheless it has acquired the features of a genuine corporation during the 40 years of its development, such as diversification, stability, the ability to make do with its own means and resources—its own metal and concrete, its own potatoes from its own sovkhozes, and its own brains, and the ability to manufacture a final product, having started with an idea. The ratio of military to civilian output here is one to three, or at the level of world standards. The volume of sales in the international market is half a billion dollars a year, and this is not the limit by far.

This means that Minsredmash may successfully use the same strategy and tactics of market behavior which foreign corporations use. I have already written about the fact that the military-industrial complex is precisely the segment of the Soviet economy that is best prepared to enter a market economy, paradoxical as it might seem. Becoming embedded in politics and replacing free economic activities with state management are the greatest obstacles. Understandably, politics and the ever-watchful eye of the state are there wherever weapons are involved. However, corruption, speculation, blackmail, and lobbyism are also there, as well as tremendous "defense" expenditures.

Minatomenergoprom began to disentangle this slightly less than a year ago. An organizational form was sought which would make it possible to separate the political and economic control of the country's nuclear complex without losing either. In general terms, two variants were under consideration. The first variant: The sector would be transformed into a state committee and a corporation. The committee would handle military, legal, and normative issues; the corporation would engage in economic operations. The second variant: The ministry would be preserved; departments would appear instead of chief administrations; producing enterprises would become independent and, if they so wish, could form concerns. The first variant represented a quite radical step. In essence, the second variant represented Soviet administrative "classicism," perhaps only with somewhat greater freedom granted to the "lower echelons."

The "bomber" lobby—the leaders of Minsredmash, its institutes, and enterprises whose interests are associated with the development, production, storage, and transportation of weapons—insisted on "classicism." Of course, the "bombers" are financed from the budget. They are influential. This year they received no less than last year from the treasury, and also by way of a separate entry in the budget, as used to be the case. Their task is to preserve this separate entry in perpetuity.

Nonetheless, in December the radical variant was getting the upper hand. A working group consisting of Russian ministers, scientists, and Minsredmash directors set up on instructions by Gennadiy Burbulis prepared its findings and a draft presidential ukase. However on 21 January the president said: Let the ministry with state normative and legal functions remain. Let the ministry itself decide whether it is worthwhile forming a corporation with purely economic functions.

Is this to say that the "committee and corporation" variant has been opted for, and that names are not particularly significant? Let us look at the preliminary structure of the Minatomenergoprom of Russia. It has absolutely necessary elements of, so to speak, a committee-style structure: a department of nuclear armaments or a department of scientific research which is intended to develop and pursue a technical policy, services for personnel training and educational establishments, and for nuclear and ecological safety. There are also elements typical of "classical" production ministries. After all, plans call for 600 out of 800 people to be doing old work in the new establishment. They will be the ones to decide whether a market-oriented corporation is to be or not.

Therefore, have the "bombers" of every description and in all positions triumphed again? Are they still unsinkable and invulnerable?

But first the structure of the Minatomenergoprom of Russia is yet to be confirmed; its incongruity with the tasks of normative and legal regulation is too obvious. Second, new economic structures are appearing within the nuclear complex after all. A concern producing fuel elements for nuclear power stations has been created; one Kazakh and one Estonian plant have joined it. Power generation workers stand ready to form their concern right away. Such a concern already exists in the Ukraine; together with the Russian concern, they may form an initial corporation. Third, in anticipation of a not-so-remote energy crisis, entrepreneurs are beginning to take a look at nuclear power stations. Apparently we will not do without attracting private capital to the industry, and for private capital, friendship with the "bombers" is unnatural.

In general, for now we should refer merely to trends rather than to decisions. Which trend prevails will largely depend on who becomes the top leader of the industry.

Participants of 8-9 Feb Rallies Detailed

LD0502213192 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Once again I can offer you some information about the rallies over the coming weekend. A session of the Moscow government has examined three applications, and a decision has been made to allow rallies, but reject demonstrations that interfere with the movement of transport on large sections of the central main roads.

On 8 February a rally will be held by the Freedom Movement on Manezh Square. The next day, at the same place, a meeting will be held by Working Moscow [Trudovaya Moskva], the Russian Communist Workers' Party, and the Moscow organization Lenin and the Fatherland [Lenin i Otechestvo].

On the same day, Sunday 9 February, on Free Russia Square outside the White House, there will be a meeting of participants in the defence of the White House, the Living Ring, the organization August '91, the White Carnation [Belaya Gvozdika], supporters of the Democratic Russia Movement, the Movement for Democratic Reforms, Military Men for Democracy, the Shield [Shchit] Union, and other democratic organizations, representatives of labor collectives, and the creative intelligentsia.

'Democratic Russia' Condemned For 9 Feb Rally

OW0602113792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1054 GMT 6 feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Democratic Party of Russia (DPR) has criticised the movement Democratic Russia for its intention to hold a meeting on Sunday [9 February], and qualified this plan as provocative.

V. Stolypin, chairman of the political council of the party's Moscow branch, told newsmen in Moscow on Wednesday [5 February] that this plan was devised largely by the communists who, taking advantage of the desperate situation in society, are making another attempt to take revenge. They wish to launch a demonstration the same day. "However Democratic Russia's decision to hold an alternative demonstration to culminate at the same place in front of the White House is also a provocative idea", said Stolypin.

A gathering of many people with differing political outlooks in the same place cannot fail to result in clashes which would serve as a pretext for restricting the freedom of meetings and demonstrations.

Participants in the news conference included leaders of the DPR's Tatarstan branch who raised the issue of holding a congress of democratic movements in Kazan on February 15-16. The party's Moscow branch will evidently send its observers to the congress in Kazan.

'Party of the Man' Cancels Rally Participation

LD0602134992 Moscow TASS in English 1255 GMT 6 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krasulin]

[Text] Moscow February 6 TASS—The Russian "Party of the Man" movement called on its supporters on

Friday [as heard] to refrain from participating in demonstrations scheduled for February 9 in Moscow.

"It is important to solve burning social problems rather than press on confrontation", the movement said in an appeal.

Two main demonstrations are scheduled in Moscow on the day. Democratic forces will gather in front of the Russian parliamentary building to support President Yeltsin and his reforms, while Communist-oriented hardliners will stage their meeting in Manezh Square near the Kremlin.

Such demonstrations are dangerous during the period of unpopular, but necessary reforms, the "Party of the Man" said.

LDP Leader Decries U.S.-Japanese Relations

OW0602115492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1054 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The press, radio and television display a growing interest in the Liberal and Democratic Party (LDP) and its leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. On Wednesday [5 February] he gave as many as eight exclusive interviews setting a kind of a record in communication with journalists. Journalists who got access to the LDP leader represented such prominent publications as the world known "Associated Press", "Time" magazine, German and Italian television channels, "SUD KURIR" German newspaper, "DAVAI, DAVAI" youth magazine, "DOMOSTROI" and "MEGAPOLIS-EXPRESS" weeklies.

Zhirinovskiy's reference to American-Japanese relations surprised journalists. He spoke of "pro-Japanese protectionism of the American leadership, which makes it possible for Japan to carry out its trade expansion on the American market. Zhirinovskiy offered his own version of George Bush's recent indisposition during his visit to Japan. "The Japanese bribed the U.S. government, and when Bush learned the size of his own share in the total sum, he fainted from the sense of extreme happiness", Zhirinovskiy said.

Liberal Democrats Call For Monetary Reform

PM0502174192 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 5 Feb 92 p 2

[Report by A. Arkhipov: "Liberals for 'Honest Market'"]

[Text] A demand that the Russian Government protect the internal market and switch to trade at world prices and on a clearing house basis with those Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] states which introduce national currencies into circulation was heard at the Moscow plenum of the Liberal Democratic Party Central Committee.

The liberal democrats believe that a start should be made to the privatization of all spheres of state property only after a money reform, otherwise an enormous proportion of Russian property "will end up in the hands of the Southern mafia and the non-Russian population and also go to the international shadow capital." The Liberal Democratic Party regards starting privatization without money reform as the undermining of the foundations of the Russian state and as "a very grave national crime."

Communist Spokesman Sees Prospects for Revival

PM0502161492 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 2

["Own information" report: "February's Political Winds"]

[Excerpt] Early February promises to be a serious trial for the Russian Government and for Russian democracy in general. In recent days the news agencies' teletypes have been full of reports on the consolidation of various political forces that declare their hostility to the economic reform and demand an about-face.

On 29 January leaders of the Russian Communist Workers Party (RCWP) announced the formation of an alternative government in case it comes to power. General Albert Makashov is intended for president, and the planned premier is Aleksey Sergeyev, member of the former CPSU Central Committee, who presented his own economic program: close the "mafioso cooperatives," reduce prices, and restore the state monopoly of foreign trade and five-year plans for the development of the national economy.

At the party's news conference it was stated that together with patriots from "Working Russia," members of the RCWP will march on the White House 9 February, demanding Yeltsin's resignation.

"A strong opposition is needed in order to extricate society from the crisis. The renascent Communist Party should become the leading part of that opposition. In literally a matter of a few weeks it could become the strongest of the parties that now exist," Sergey Skvortsov, coordinator of the All-Union Committee for Communist Unity, stated at a press conference held in Moscow 30 January on the subject of the tasks of this committee, which was formed last September. The committee is categorically opposed to price liberalization, proposes a nationwide referendum on the subject, and advocates the stepping up of state intervention in the economy and "the operation of administrative levers."

"Pamyat" leader D. Vasilyev spoke about Vice President A. Rutskoy's ideas, assessing his recent press articles as an "act of civic courage." As he put it, "Rutskoy has hit the nail on the head. He will win many people's sympathies... A real Russian officer. I would appoint him commander in chief." [passage omitted]

'Social Justice' Leader Claims Growing Support

PM0402132992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 30 Jan 92 p 2

[Interview with V. Finistov, member of the Union of Nonparty People for Social Justice Coordinating Committee, by Aleksandr Shinkin under the "In Parties and Movements" rubric; place, date not given: "An Official Is No Friend to a Poor Man"—first two paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] People with thin wallets are finding it increasingly difficult to get by. And at the present time, unfortunately, there is no ray of hope. What does the Union of Nonparty People for Social Justice, which unites mainly the country's low-income population, think about this?

V. Finistov, a member of its coordinating committee, commented as follows on the current situation:

[Finistov] When politicians appeal to the people to be patient and make certain sacrifices, they realize perfectly well that they themselves will not be living in poverty. And life in January demonstrated this yet again: The poor get poorer and the rich get richer. How far does today's minimum wage of 342 rubles [R] go? Enough for a kilogram of good sausage. And what about a government member's salary of almost R4,000-plus? That is a difference and a half, as people in Odessa say. However, it has been known since time immemorial that a Russian official will find some way to extract income over and above his salary.

Therefore we believe that the policy being pursued by the Russian president and government is leading to social confrontation and instability. Today it is clear to everyone that those in power and those who only yesterday were operating in the shadow economy are now making vast fortunes for themselves while ordinary people are forced to remain with empty pockets. It is a pity that Russian President B. Yeltsin, who, we recall, spoke out vigorously against privileges and social injustice quite recently, refuses to recognize this. It was for these reasons, strictly speaking, that he was elected president in the first place.

Before taking a step into the "civilized world," the legislative power should, in our view, clearly define in law the difference between honestly and dishonestly acquired capital. Capital acquired by criminal means should be expropriated. After all, it is known that the sums in the shadow economy are tens of times greater than what is in the CPSU coffers. However, the interests of rich people, as we can see today, have been given the "green light" both in parliament and the government. But working people, not to mention those who are deprived, are left poverty-stricken on a diet of bread of water. And you do not have to be a prophet to see that if the government takes another step like the one it took at the beginning of January, it will lead not to the civilized world but to civil war.

[Shinkin] You talk as though you were a real political force.

[Finistov] We express the interests of the country's low-income population. And today this population is steadily increasing in number. The number of our supporters striving to uphold human rights and social justice is also growing.

Contact us on 450-87-92.

Democratic Reforms Movement Meeting Viewed

924C0538A Moscow KULTURA in Russian No 5, 1 Feb 92 p 6

[Igor Afanasyev report: "DRM: Not Power But Influence"]

[Text] A meeting of the board of the Movement for Democratic Reforms has taken place. It was formed by the constituent congress and also parties, social and political organizations, and regional centers.

Once again, as at the congress, questions of the attitude of the DRM [Movement for Democratic Reforms] toward power, toward the reforms, and toward the government were at the forefront. Not because there has been a change in the Movement's reform position in the six weeks, but in connection with the importunate propaganda orientation of certain mass media toward the creation of an image of the DRM as a force consistently in opposition to governments. No further back than the day before the meeting of the DRM Board, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA published a made-to-order "investigation" (more precisely, a political denunciation), which mentioned the "opponents" of the Russian Government by name. Beginning with functionaries of the president's staff (Yu. Petrov and company), who have "gone for broke," it included the military-industrial complex headed by A. Rutskoy, the corps of deputies headed by R. Khasbulatov, the CPSU, which has gone underground, sectoral unions, the press and Central Television, and finally democratic politicians of the "first draft" who have formalized themselves in the Movement for Democratic Reforms. They allegedly have begun "to recognize that the best way to power for them lies over the 'bones' of the collapsed Russian Government" (?).

So the place of the DRM in the political spectrum has been defined by the "experts" quite precisely—on a par with those avid for power and prepared to snatch it from the weakened hands of the present government. How tenacious in society is the totalitarian thinking which judges everything by categories of implacable struggle and enemy images!

And there followed at a news conference this question (from a NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent, incidentally): Against whom does the DRM intend to struggle in seeking to accomplish its set goals? Responding, A.N. Yakovlev emphatically turned it around: "Not against whom but for what will the DRM struggle—this is the heart of the problem."

And the Movement will struggle, as the participants in the meeting said, for the consistent realization of economic and sociopolitical reforms which the governments of a number of states of the Commonwealth, preoccupied with problems of a struggle for power and the slaking of their ambitions, are in no hurry to implement.

The DRM will struggle for a real change in the position of the individual in society and the state in order that his rights and liberties become the starting point and that which is most important in the organization of our life together.

The DRM will struggle for the civilized surmounting of the crisis and the achievement of civic peace in society and prevention of the danger of social and interethnic conflicts.

Unfortunately, the speakers observed, the political situation continues to deteriorate, and peoples' hopes connected with the reforms which had commenced and the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States are not being justified. Instead of a search for accord, there is growing confrontation, and the prestige of the authorities and political leadership is declining. The continuing decline in production testifies that market stimuli have not been commissioned.

In the face of the burdens brought about by the ineffectiveness of the measures adopted by the government part of society is prepared, as polls show, to waive the democratic path of development. Under these conditions a real danger for democracy is the interfacing of national Bolshevism and fascism. Our society has not yet worked its way through to profound democratic transformations; rather, it has merely democratic procedures which could not halt an offensive of a dictatorship of the right or the left.

The participants in the meeting of the DRM Board appealed to all democratic forces to concentrate on constructive support for the efforts of governments and authorities effecting real transformations through active participation in the reforms. The Movement for Democratic Reforms evinced no desire to make its way to power over the "bones of governments," but called on them to coordinate their actions in a decisive advance toward market relations, adopting economic measures of a comprehensive nature, and to immediately undertake land reform, the denationalization and privatization of property, and the demonopolization of the economy.

The DRM Board elected a 45-person political council—the body coordinating the work of the Movement between meetings of the board. It will be headed by seven cochairmen (A. Volskiy, G. Popov, A. Sobchak, S. Shatalin, E. Shevardnadze, V. Shostakovskiy, and A. Yakovlev). An auditing commission of the Movement (O. Kutafin, chairman) was elected also. The Political Council confirmed at its meeting I. Smirnov as chairman of the DRM Executive Committee.

Officials Hold News Conference on Economy

Nechayev on Reform, Future

LD0502185392 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1310 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Now for the Moscow news conference I promised you more details about. At the news conference, it was announced that the Government of Russia is prepared to increase the rate of compensation paid to the population as a result of the price rises. This encouraging statement was made by Aleksandr Shokhin, the minister of labor and employment. He and Andrey Nechayev, first deputy minister of economics and finance, summed up the results of the first month of reforms and gave their prognosis for Russia's socioeconomic development this year. Andrey Nechayev made the following statement today:

[Begin Nechayev recording] I risk seeming too much of an optimist, but in my view nothing dramatic or unexpected happened in January. We managed, thank goodness, to stay within the bounds of a pretty positive development of events. This was despite the pressure that the government began to feel, virtually from day one, both with regard to demands for wage increases and in particular from the sectors of the economy covered by the budget. Increases in investment, subsidies, and support from the budget were demanded. The government is managing so far to cope with this pressure without any big conflicts and restricting budget expenditure to the maximum. [passage omitted]

The results of up-to-date surveys carried out by independent expert groups and independent institutions—so there is no pressure here on the part of the customer, you can be assured—show that in many areas and many towns, prices for a whole series of food products are already going down. In particular, the latest survey of beef prices for January showed that in about half of the towns surveyed, a few dozen, prices were stable; in 40 percent of towns they went down; and in only 10 percent of towns did prices go up. This is an objective process, demonstrating that the normal economic laws of the market are valid for our country, too, and that they are starting to operate.

According to our estimates, in the first quarter prices will go up about 4.5 to five-fold in total, compared with December—and that means actual prices, not declared prices; I must especially stress this again. If everything develops according to the best of the worst scenarios as of now, our calculations show that by about the end of the second quarter we can expect a sharp fall in price increases, to about 10 percent per month. That is a pretty high inflation level, too, but not to be compared, of course, with what we had before. Then we will have the opportunity to start with measures to invigorate economic activity. As a result of this, the fall in output will, of course, continue. We will not be able to halt it this year. We have to be realistic here and be honest with ourselves; the fall in output will go down to 4-5 percent in the second half of the year according to our estimates. [end recording]

Nechayev on 'Acute' Situation

LD0602023592 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1630 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Editorial Report] Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian at 1630 GMT on 5 February carries a five-minute interview with Andrey Alekseyevich Nechayev, deputy minister of economy and finances.

Correspondent Olga Vasilenko asks why, after the liberalization of prices by the Russian Government, no increase in output followed. Nechayev says that the liberalization of prices and free pricing in accordance with supply and demand is the main prerequisite for the normal development of production, for the normal change of its structure. But the government has never fostered the illusion that the liberalization of prices would result in an increase in production in a matter of days. "Fairly heavy and thankless work will be facing all of us for some time to come," he says.

Nechayev adds: "Freeing prices makes it possible to balance, at least balance to a greater extent, supply and demand. The situation in Moscow, in St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, and in a number of other major industrial—in all major industrial centers—indeed is very grave and perhaps graver than in the rest of Russia. I say this not without evidence: As the chairman of the Commission for the Operational Analysis of the Economic Situation, I am now receiving lots of information from the localities, from all regions, and through various channels, and indeed in these major industrial centers the situation is far more complicated than in many other towns.

"Why? Because the supply of Moscow was to a considerable extent based on import and on deliveries from other republics. Moscow itself does not produce food and the Moscow Oblast region itself is unable to supply Moscow fully," Nachayev says. He goes on to explain that there was a sharp drop in imports because of the foreign currency problems and because the republics have to a considerable extent reduced deliveries to Russia in general, and to Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other major cities in particular. This has resulted in the grave situation now existing in Moscow and these other cities. Nechayev recalls that he was pleasantly surprised by the quantity of goods on offer in Bryansk during Yeltsin's tour there recently, as Bryansk is not a major industrial center.

Responding to a question about social dissatisfaction, Nechayev says: "I am quite happy to admit that there is a lot we do not know and therefore we sometimes find it rather difficult to react to a situation where we are attacked from both the right and the left, from the rear and the front, in both an underhand way and openly. The situation is acute, but it is not hopeless. In my view, despite all the difficulty of the situation, the people understand, nevertheless, that realistically there is no other path".

"If the patience of our fellow citizens runs out and this social pressure turns out to be too strong," Nechayev concludes, "and if, under the influence of populist decisions by the Supreme Soviet, etc., we now relax our budget and our finance policy and allow a new injection of money into the economy, this may lead to a catastrophe."

Shokhin on Inflation, Production

OW0602042992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1853 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to forecasts by the deputy chairman of the Russian government, Aleksandr Shokhin, prices in the first quarter of this year will grow by 350-400% over December 1991 prices. Towards the end of the second quarter, however, prices should be rising at a much slower rate. The Vice Prime Minister gave this forecast at a press conference in Moscow on Wednesday [5 February] which highlighted Russia's financial and economic situation.

According to Shokhin, prices have already stabilized and even begun to drop on consumer markets in many regions in the country.

The drop in production in the first quarter, according to Shokhin, could be as bad as 16-18%. But in the second half of the year the drop should only be by 5%, Shokhin estimated.

Further Nechayev, Shokhin Comments

LD0502143892 Moscow TASS in English 1356 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Pavel Ryabov]

[Text] Moscow February 5 ITAR-TASS—In the first quarter of the current year prices in Russia will grow by 4.5 or five times as to December 1991, Andrey Nechayev, first deputy minister of economy and finance, said at a news conference today.

In his opinion, if the economic situation continues to develop as it does now, one may expect a sharp slowing down in the growth of prices to the inflation level of some 10 percent a month. At the same time, Nechayev admitted the decline of production would hardly be overcome this year. In the first quarter it will stand at 16-18 percent and in the second half the decline figure may be reduced to 4-5 percent, according to government estimates. On the whole, the decline for the current year is expected to be 12 percent.

Aleksandr Shokhin, Russian deputy prime minister and minister of labour and employment who also took part in the news conference, said the government had expected the growth of prices by 2.5 times in January after the liberalisation of prices was announced. In effect, they went up by 3-3.5 times.

Assessing the Russian economic situation in January, the deputy prime minister said "the explosive growth of prices was accompanied by the continuing shortage of many goods and services." In his opinion, it is the result of a "natural reaction of post-socialist producers to the growth of prices": producers seek to curtail production and make up for it by increasing the price of their products.

Speaking about the privatisation process, Shokhin said that some 45-50 percent of shops in the republic have been privatised and put on a commercial basis.

According to Shokhin, the first month of the implementation of the radical reform, which began with the liberalisation of prices on January 2, revealed some negative social consequences of this process. Therefore it is necessary to introduce some corrections in the reform course, including through expanding the range of goods sold at fixed prices, he said. "The most important thing is not to let the correction of some details of the reform course develop into the changing of the course itself," Shokhin pointed out.

Responding to questions of journalists, Shokhin said that "the subsistence level, which mostly takes into account food prices, stands now at 550 roubles in Russia."

According to Shokhin, the improvement of the food situation after January 20 as a result of massive food deliveries from the West did not take place. "The flow of goods by the credit lines, which began to be unfrozen after the Russian Government announced its reform programme, unfortunately has not reached us so far, partially for technical reasons both on the part of this country and of our creditors," Shokhin said. He explained that the adopted procedure of the insurance of credits, granted by the West, takes some time. The shipment of the purchased grain and the obtaining of hard currency for the chartering of ships also presents some problem. However, the government hopes that most of those problems will be settled in the forthcoming days.

Speaking about the course towards the working out of a deficit-free budget of the country, followed by the Russian Government, Andrey Nechayev explained that although a deficit budget is widely used all over the world as a means of financing, in Russia with its low development of the finance market the deficit can be covered only with the help of emission, with all the inflation consequences involved. "This is why in our country a deficit-free budget is a normal, healthy pragmatism," Nechayev stressed.

In his opinion, some differences in the economic policy of the government and the one pursued by the Central Bank are the result of the fact that the Central Bank of Russia is not prepared psychologically to pursue a tough restrictive crediting policy. "The bank has not yet realised to the full the dominating role of the soft crediting policy in generating inflation," Nechayev said.

Gaydar Comments on Cash-Flow Situation

PM0502124592 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Feb 92 First Edition p 1, 2

[ITAR-TASS report under "Firsthand" rubric: "Gaydar Not Prepared to Resign, but Ready to Make Concessions"]

[Excerpts] "I have no intention of resigning and will strive for the implementation of the reform course which we have chosen," Yegor Gaydar, vice premier of the Russian Government and minister of economy and finance, told journalists. He was speaking at a news conference about the progress and prospects of the economic reform in Russia. [passage omitted]

"While the ruble is weak," Yegor Gaydar noted, it would be premature to set up a stabilization fund to support the ruble with the help of foreign partners. In the present situation, in Yegor Gaydar's words, the resources in this fund could "evaporate overnight" as a result of the general lack of confidence in the future course of the development of events and of economic disorganization. This is why, in addition to the "weakness of the ruble," the special ruble-dollar exchange rate for foreign investors is being retained, he said.

The vice premier said that if reforms have developed favorably by the middle of the year, there may be preconditions for making the ruble convertible, banning payments in hard currency inside the country, and abolishing the special exchange rate for foreign investors.

Dwelling on the question of the cash-flow situation in Russia, Yegor Gaydar noted that according to preliminary information, money emission in January was reduced by approximately 30 percent in comparison with December. In this connection he stressed that "positive processes" are beginning to emerge in relations between the government and the Russian Central Bank: "We are have mutual understanding on the main trends of the credit and monetary policy." The vice premier voiced the opinion that "had the Central Bank's policy not changed, we could be sure to have a ruble-dollar exchange rate of 400 rubles to a dollar today."

What is Yegor Gaydar's prediction for the development of the situation in the Russian economy in the near future? "Unless unpredictable political changes occur, the rate of inflation in February-March will be relatively low, it will be no relation to the January upsurge in prices," the vice premier emphasized.

Burbulis Promises No Price Increases

PM0402135392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 1

[ITAR-TASS report: "Russian Government Will Not Raise Prices"]

[Text] "The government cannot and will not raise prices," stated Gennadiy Burbulis, state secretary and first deputy chairman of the Russian Government, commenting, at the request of a Russian television channel correspondent, on rumors of a new surge in prices.

The state secretary stressed that the government will "punish those who are oppressing the population through prices today."

'Experts' Interviewed on Economic Situation

PM0502144592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 30 Jan 92 p 2

[Interviews with E. Vedernikov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Commission on the Budget, Taxes, and Prices, and S. Polyakov, director of Moscow's A.I. Mikoyan machine building plant, by unidentified correspondent under the rubric "Economic Barometer"; place and date not given: "How Do You Feel, Russia?"—first four paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] Today, when prices are rising higher with each passing day and when even the immediate economic prospects of the states of the former Union is sinking in chaos and confusion, a quite specific question is troubling us all: What will the future bring? The editorial office plans to publish the opinions of well-known economists, politicians, and economic managers on this subject. We will primarily discuss the economic reform, the pluses and minuses of changes in the national economy.

We asked well-known Russian experts to answer two questions:

1. How do you assess the current situation in the economy? Has Ye. Gaydar's team chosen the best possible method for transition to a market economy?

2. What, in your opinion, should be done in the immediate future to stop the impending famine, inflation, and food riots which some politicians predict?

E. Vedernikov, deputy chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Commission on the Budget, Taxes, and Prices:

1. We agree with all the constructive elements contained in the government's program. But we do not at all consider that this is the only and most successful program for ensuring transition to a market economy. It contains elements that certainly should be corrected. For example, the taxation policy, which has now been adopted, in essence constrains the enterprises hand and foot.

On the subject of privatization. In my view, it is barely getting off the ground. There are far too many declarations about privatization and very little action. I consider that for privatization to get started, it is necessary to elaborate an initial document, a methodolgy of privatization, to explain what we are privatizing, when, and within what time scale... Now there is perhaps nobody who can answer these questions and explain the procedure for carrying out privatization. And I cannot because I have no documents. This is an obvious methodological error by the present government.

Unfortunately the government is doing a great deal hurriedly, without the necessary preparations. For example, people say that free prices should not be regulated. All this is rubbish! Price regulation is implemented in all countries. The state should regulate prices without any spontaneity or letting things take their course.

The market should not be viewed as an end in itself. As I see it, this is a new economic mechanism replacing the one which existed earlier. I consider that the market is still the most realistic means capable of extricating the country from the prevailing economic situation. But the transition to the market should have been carefully thought out, and the consequences of each decision being made should have been painstakingly weighed up.

2. I am in favor of a solution which not everybody shares. I consider that in order to save the situation, we should now supply the most needy strata of the population with actual food products. In other words, give out food parcels. It is necessary to do this in order to maintain a minimum standard of living for the people. Although at the moment it is somehow tactless to talk about any kind of standard of living at all. The people are in a most difficult situation.

S. Polyakov, director of Moscow's A.I. Mikoyan machine building plant:

1. The present situation in the economy is, in my view, simply catastrophic. Production is falling at a precipitous rate, and I, alas, cannot for the moment name any realistic methods which would stop this process. The only solution which I think could play a positive role is to maintain centralization of power and return to planning.

The situation prevailing today is such that the defense industry which, alas, was the only thing we created during the years of Soviet power, is totally collapsing. It is collapsing due to a lack of orders. This is understandable, but after all it is impossible to imagine that an enterprise which yesterday was making airplanes will today suddenly start turning out pans and mowing machines. This requires training, it requires specialization. But few people take this into consideration.

I also consider it an unwise step to proclaim the slogan about regional economic accountability. There may, for example, be a plant in some region which turns out welding electrodes. It has a monopoly, it is the only one of its kind in the country. It begins to demand everything it wants for itself.

In short, we are being pushed into primitive barter. Now I am receiving papers from partner enterprises demanding food, building materials, metal, and consumer goods from us by barter.

By the way, this is the result of the permission to allow foreign currency to circulate in the country. After all, look at taxi drivers in this country who are already refusing to take fares for rubles, you must give them dollars. But this is absurd. Pounds sterling and marks cannot circulate side by side with rubles in the state. If a foreigner comes here, let him change his currency into rubles and live on them. It is turning out that we are creating a second economy for ourselves. But the government has to this day paid virtually no attention to this. It is clear that someone is gaining from this.

2. Whenever 10 people at once make a grab for the wheel on a ship in distress, it is obvious that the ship will sink. Only one captain is necessary. I consider this is the case for us as well.

I am certain that it is impossible to disguise speculation as entrepreneurship. If an entrepreneur, businessman, or cooperative member produces something, brings some tangible benefit to the people, he can and should be supported in every possible way. I cannot accept as necessary all the sundry cooperatives which are engaged exclusively in brokerage. This is not useful work.

By the way, I had another—maybe fantastic—plan to extricate ourselves from the prevailing situation. For this it is first of all necessary to ban foreign currency circulation in the country. And to allow foreign businessmen to buy everything here: rivers, forests, transport, plants... But for rubles. The foreigners will have to earn them. How? By saturating our market with produce and consumer goods. And once they become masters, they will teach us how to work and manage.

41% of Oil Reserves Said 'Exhausted'

PM0602100792 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 31 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] A catastrophic situation has developed in the country's oil extraction industry. According to experts, 41 percent of the former USSR's oil reserves have already been exhausted. What is more, this oil came from the best and most easily accessible deposits.

The remainder is sufficient for the next 30-50 years, according to experts. If no new wells are sunk, not a single tonne of oil will be produced in five years' time, since the current rate of extraction exceeds the extraction rate of the kings of black gold—Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, and Kuwait—three- to five-fold.

Official Predicts Energy Price Increase

LD0502043992 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 3 Feb 92

[Text] Maximum prices have been set in Russia for fuel and energy resources sold by suppliers. One tonne of oil costs 350 rubles; 1000 cubic meters of gas cost 260 rubles; 1 tonne of coking coal costs 280 rubles. But, Yelena Karpel, deputy chairwoman of the Russian Price Committee, predicts that we will soon see a new increase in the prices of these resources. For the time being, gas and oil producers and miners are working with equipment and materials obtained at the old prices. As soon as February or March, new prices for raw materials and machines will begin to ravage their pockets. When their pockets become empty, they will begin to demand a new increase in prices.

Yelena Karpel estimates roughly that prices will initially increase by another 50 percent. An increase is inevitable, but it will not be as sharp as the January increase. By increasing the prices of ferrous metals by ten times, enterprises have built a sort of emergency reserve into the price.

This will also serve as a fairly effective flood barrier against the new wave of prices. Later, in conditions of stabilized production, there will be realistic agreements made, and realistic prices, Yelena Karpel believes.

Unemployment Forecasts Fail To Materialize

PM0502163192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 31 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Fortunately, not all gloomy forecasts come true. Despite numerous forecasts by specialists, foreign experts, and the press, mass unemployment has not yet materialized in Russia.

We were told by Igor Zaslavskiy, general director of the Moscow labor exchange, that despite the estimated figure of 25,000 unemployed, only 12,000 are drawing unemployment benefit. The number of people turning to the labor exchange for help has not increased either. It totals 12,000 per month on average. Since the establishment of the labor exchange, 1,000 people have been helped to obtain early retirement, and 4,000 were found new jobs. The minimum unemployment benefit is now 445 rubles, which naturally attracts a certain section of the population.

At present both labor exchanges and the press are again anticipating a sharp upsurge in unemployment. But will it happen? In our country processes sometimes follow a strange course.

Committee Reports State Food Stocks Decrease

924A0510D Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 28 Jan 92 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Half-Empty Granaries"]

[Text] Moscow—The volume of the grain procurement in Russia in 1991 turned out to be the lowest of the last 25 years, a Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics report states. There were also difficulties in forming state food resources in other crops as well last season. State procurements of sunflower seeds were 1,7 million metric tons—25 percent—less than 1990; potatoes—4.7 million metric tons (6 percent less); and vegetables—4.4 million metric tons (28 percent less).

Effects of Price Liberalization Assessed

924C0471A Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 22 Jan 92 pp 1, 2

[Article by Mikhail Leontyev: "Three Weeks of Liberalization—No Effect Noticeable So Far. Will the Government Succeed in Beating Back Attacks by Detractors? The Pursuit Party Is Catching Up With the Limping Reform, and Surrogate Money is Catching Up With the Ruble"]

[Text] Three weeks are about to elapse from the moment the beginning of liberalization was announced. This time is certainly not sufficient for summing up any results but certainly is sufficient for some substantive trends to emerge. As was to be expected, no abundance of merchandise came about, whereas the purchasing activity of the people who responded with fortitude to an unprecedented leap of prices exceeded all projections. Apparently this zeal is attributable not only to "inflationary expectations," but also to the extreme mistrust of all possible measures by the authorities on the part of the populace, and absolute uncertainty regarding economic prospects.

The monetary policy of the Russian Government to date is not worthy even of that name: The "economic team" sets forth a certain, quite simple, monetary and fiscal ideology; the president and the parliament muddy it up by promising some preferences and relaxation in the field of taxes; these promises go down the drain. In turn, the central bank promises to replace cash circulation with some kind of temporary checks, the credibility of which is unknown.

Measures aimed at stabilizing the ruble have so far brought about the ruble turning into an absolute joke. On this score, only a completely independent Ukraine has been able to outdo the Russian Government. Having failed to receive the amount of cash necessary for the promised comprehensive social protections, the Ukrainian Government put coupons into circulation. This surrogate currency, suitable for the couponized and fiercely independent forms of protecting the domestic market, which is overflowing with lard and Ukrainian vodka, crowded rubles out of circulation within several days. Now the Ukraine, which has embarked on a monetary reform sort of by happenstance, must come up with at least some financial policy ad hoc. At present, the ruble-denominated coupon is virtually doomed to become the Ukrainian national currency. This is all the more lucrative while the coupons have an artificially high rate of exchange against the ruble due to their insufficient emission. However, we may say with confidence that this is a temporary phenomenon, and that the catch-up financial policy of the independent Ukraine will quickly drive the coupons down to the proper status.

In the situation of the ruble, the cash crisis is becoming the crucial phenomenon. It threatens to become continuous in the environment of mounting hyperinflation.

The snowballing segment of circulation serviced by cash is a unique peculiarity of the current Russian market, as well as the entire "CIS-y" market (from CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]). An anomalous but quite justifiable need for cash necessitates emission which no domestic or even imported Goznak [State Bill Printing Plant] could handle.

Therefore, ideal conditions are created for various banks, regional structures, and other enterprises to put into circulation promissory notes, checks, coupons, certificates of deposit, etc. which, compared to the ruble, can hardly be called surrogates anymore. This process, which we may term private emission, has actually begun already.

Ultimately the implementation of the intent of the Russian Government to stabilize the ruble runs into the condition of the consumer market, or more precisely, the transformation of the ruble into universal tender. As of now, references to unrestricted prices are possible to the same degree to which the first deputy foreign minister of Russia, Petr Aven, declared the ruble convertible. All barriers which governed the flow of goods before the "liberalization era" have not only been maintained, but also reinforced. For example, the intensity of the distribution of package food orders at enterprises has increased proportionately to the growth of prices.

Illusions by the government, which believes that enterprises are hoarding products with a view to more advantageous trading in merchandise in the future, and that as soon as cheap loans to enterprises are cut off, the goods will flood the market, are clearly exaggerated. It appears that the government underestimates the extent of economic recession caused by the severance of traditional production links. Persistent attempts to balance the budget by means of the high withholding of taxes may cause those enterprises teetering on the brink of closure to wind up production abruptly. High rates of unemployment will perhaps be more uncomfortable for the Soviet people than high prices, the stability of which they still do not yet quite believe in thanks to numerous admonitions by the president. In this case, their response may be more explosive than after 2 January.

Some particularly impulsive politicians have already taken their measures in anticipation of this. St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak displayed profound understanding of market reforms, as was the case before. On instructions from the mayor's office, "regulated" prices for goods sold on ration cards will be introduced in the city. Perhaps individual "democrats" do not understand quite accurately which political consequences should accompany the winding down of the current reform. The desire to break the neck of the ill-starred government as soon as possible, and to thus establish their authority as defenders of the people, has gone to their heads. However, the government itself will not be able to consider that it has nothing to do with this once these goals have been achieved.

Academician on Effects of Reforms To Date

MK0502085092 Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 2

[Interview with Academician T. Zaslavskaya by T. Pomelova; place and date not given: "'Liberalization Is the Knight's Move,' Academician T. Zaslavskaya Surmised When Answering MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA's Questions"]

[Text] [Pomelova] 1. Is price liberalization going as it should?

2. Is there a real threat of the people's being impoverished?

3. Economic partnership within the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]: Together or apart?

[Zaslavskaya] 1. Of all the reforms being carried out in our country economic reform has proved the toughest nut to crack. As for its most important element—liberalization—it would be no great exaggeration to say that everything is not going as it should.

What is more, economic reform is above all reform of ownership. It is always carried out in someone else's interests and, thus, cannot be calm and painless and generates opposition. One must not forget that one of the most important conditions for success in this is unity in the country and unity in tactics. Our reformers regrettably disagree as to what should be done and how—the captain and his crew are not united and a struggle is under way. This is making it even more difficult to implement reform.

As for the Russian leadership, it is the best that we have had so far. But the "legacy" that it has received is making it difficult to disentangle the consequences of its predecessors' activity.

The Russian Government is well aware that "the cart has been put before the horse": Price liberalization began before privatization of industry, land, and trade. Taking an impartial look at the situation, would it be realistic to expect all-out privatization of state property from the outset? I think the answer is obvious, since it did not prove possible to get this moving under any circumstances.

In my view, price liberalization is a kind of roundabout maneuver, a knight's move, whereby it has become clear that the present situation cannot be tolerated and that it is necessary to advance further, either continuing reform a step at a time—implementing demonopolization and privatization—or give up hope of ever putting it into effect.

The prices that we have today are after all not liberalized prices but monopoly prices. In not allowing farmers, for instance, access to Moscow markets where they could sell output at normal prices, mafia groups are also contributing to this.

In short, the main thing now is to combat all manifestations of monopolism.

2. Our Public Opinion Study Center is carrying out numerous studies on the market, living standards, income, and poverty. I can therefore say that the danger that the people will become impoverished is not just realistic, it is more than realistic.

In January prices rose by 10-15 times, sometimes 40 times or even more. Incomes rose two-or threefold, and for a considerable proportion of the population did not rise at all.

According to our information, there are three levels of poverty. The first is when a person cannot live like people around him. It would be good for all us to experience that kind of "poverty." The second level comprises those people at the level of the minimum living standard needed to ensure compliance with social norms: A person has enough food not to starve and enough clothing not to freeze or repel people around him. Last, the third group of people lives at the absolute poverty level, whereby a person does not have enough to eat, wears rags, and cannot meet his basic needs.

Last September the average level of consumption was close to the subsistence minimum. But this relatively prosperous indicator was a mean value produced by summarizing very high and extremely low incomes. Suffice it to say that two-thirds of the families polled had incomes below the minimum living wage and one-third of these even lived below the absolute poverty line.

Incomes have now dropped still further. In my opinion, more than half of the population are not buying clothes at all—all their money is being spent on food alone. The old food stocks are acting as some kind of buffer here, making it possible to somewhat reduce expenditure. Obviously, people cannot endure this for long. Today 58 percent of respondents in Russia think that there may be ad hoc protests. In other words, the government does not have much time.

Needless to say, the Russian leadership has realized where matters stand. Nonetheless the degree of "belt-tightening" has proved excessive and too painful. So a major economic analysis is needed of what has happened.

I would like to make another comment here. If prices of commodities have risen by a factor of 10 and wages have doubled, an enterprise, by the logic of things, should have colossal profits. It pays taxes to the state out of these profits that are spent on providing people with social security. The funds left at the enterprise's disposal are destined to buy in raw materials and new technologies and thus to increase output production. But where are these profits, where are the technologies and social programs?

The question logically arises: Who has gained from the reform? If we are ultimately unable to say that the population has gained, then the reform must be deemed a failure: Most people have simply been robbed and have not gained the anticipated result from this extraordinary measure.

3. Rupture rather than rapprochement can now be observed in relations among members of the CIS. Objectively the new independent states will be unable to survive without one another. But a subjective factor prevails now: Economic relations are primarily determined by political factors and even ambitions. All this does nothing to promote cooperation.

The outcome of the confrontation depends on whether reason prevails. It would obviously be absurd to gamble on the old idea of "economic policy" and revive the old economic ties whereby shipments were made at any cost. Now we must expect serious talks and mutually beneficial partnership.

In short, the fact that the CIS is living through a period of disengagement [razmezhevaniye] among its members is an inevitable first stage of development. It is important, though, that it does not prove to be the last.

Supreme Soviet

Khasbulatov Meets With Media, Urges Support

LD0602002192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Report by correspondent I. Minayev on a meeting by Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khaslubatov with Ostankino Television and Radio Company managers at the Ostankino studios in Moscow on 5 February; includes recorded comments by Khasbulatov; on the "Novosti" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Minayev] A wide range of economic and political issues was touched upon in the discussion. According to the speaker [Khasbulatov], the Russian parliament understands that there can be no return to the past and that fundamental reforms are necessary. However, Ruslan Khasbulatov sometimes has the depressing feeling that the government has no serious economic plans. The fact that parliament criticizes the government is a perfectly natural thing. Ruslan Khasbulatov admitted that he is accustomed to criticism himself, although he is depressed by the lack of knowledge shown by critics, including journalists, and their superficial judgments.

Ruslan Khasbulatov appealed to them, as far as possible, to avoid stirring up passions and exacerbating tension in society, which is high enough already.

[Khasbulatov] We must now appear before the most agitated audience and try somehow to explain what is good, what is bad, and what they should expect.

[Minayev] Television and radio are capable of becoming, to a certain degree, a consolidating force that soothes passions. Yegor Yakovlev, chairman of the Ostankino company, talked about its reorganization plan. The company could become international, with the participation of founders from the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries, creating a single space for information and culture. The company expects support from the heads of the sovereign states and their parliaments.

[Khasbulatov] It would simply be absolutely stupid if we were to start the process of eliminating this company. It is simply vitally necessary, exceptionally necessary, for all the Commonwealth countries. I think the president will decide. But, if the president does not decide, for some reason, the Supreme Soviet will take it upon itself to resolve the matter, especially because the Supreme Soviet provides finances.

[Minayev] Ruslan Khasbulatov then answered questions from the journalists.

Further on Khasbulatov Meeting

LD0502204492 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1630 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Report by correspondent Aleksandr Ruvinskiy on a meeting held between Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet, and Ostankino Television and Radio Company managers at the Ostankino studios in Moscow on 5 February—presented by announcer Olga Vasilenko]

[Text] [Vasilenko] Our Supreme Soviet, our Russian parliament, has been offended by some of the press organs. Perhaps that is why Ruslan Imranovich Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet, came to us today at Ostankino, in order to meet with the managers of the Television and Radio Company and request support, so that the press might not be so hard on the parliament. This meeting was attended by my colleague, Aleksandr Ruvinskiy. What is happening there, Aleksandr?

[Ruvinskiy] Indeed, not only were the managers of our Television and Radio Company invited to the meeting, but leading journalists were present there as well. This meeting is still in progress, but I came here especially to the studio in order to tell you....

[Vasilenko, interrupting] Just in time.

[Ruvinskiy] Yes, inasmuch as Ruslan Imranovich has already just addressed journalists. Well, it must be said that of late he has been meeting journalists fairly frequently, and especially television journalists. Nevertheless, one more such meeting had become necessary; and this was because, I think, of a certain anxiety as to how progress in our economic reform is being covered in our press on the whole, and not only on radio and television.

Well, Ruslan Imranovich said that of various reform programs—we have had very many of late—he recalled the "500 days" program, which he very much supported. He returned to this event of 500 days ago, and recalled the conference conducted by Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev with leading economists and leaders of the country, when this program was essentially rejected.

[Vasilenko] I recall that he swore a bit at this program.

[Ruvinskiy] Yes, and even then Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin left this conference in a fit of temper. Well, Ruslan Imranovich, too, as early as that, spoke against rejecting this program.

[Vasilenko] Yes.

[Ruvinskiy] At this conference he said that we were letting slip at that time the last chance to preserve our Union. On the whole, as time has shown, as history has shown, he was right. But nevertheless he stressed today, too, that he does not doubt that some time from now, reasons to unite again will appear in our sovereign states. Well, I think that, too.

[Vasilenko] I think that, too.

[Ruvinskiy] Nevertheless, the program our government has now started to implement, as Ruslan Imranovich believes—and this view is being held by many in the Supreme Soviet—is in need of certain corrections, something which is, well, perfectly natural, because in the economy there are no dogmas one could adopt for a long time, without making any corrections. In particular, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is being subjected to criticism now for the fact that he is allegedly making concessions to the military-industrial complex, something which he flatly rejects. Well, what do these correctives consist of? Well, first of all, in starting privatization as soon as possible in our state.

[Vasilenko] I think that he is right there.

[Ruvinskiy] In the government's program this is envisaged basically for March-April. Well, of course, here all professional economists support him. Well, of course the decision made at the latest meeting of the presidium of the Russian Supreme Soviet has given rise to a great deal of talk now. This was the first serious amendment introduced in our economic reform.

[Vasilenko] The government agreed with it?

[Ruvinskiy] The government agreed with it—and on the whole, Ruslan Imranovich believes, that under conditions of the shortages, general shortages, which have now been created in the country, the directors of enterprises have no incentives to expand production. They can resolve all their problems through raising prices, taking into account that monopolism is still occurring in our country. They can raise prices as much as they like, even a hundred times; there are no obstacles in their way, and already many prices have turned out higher than what is sensible. It is in connection with this that he believes that there must be certain amendments: regulation, control, regularization of prices. This is the point of the decision which is now being adopted.

Moreover, Ruslan Imranovich dwelt on some political problems. He spoke of the constitution, which we need to adopt as soon as possible, inasmuch as our previous constitution was adopted when we, Russia, were one of the members of the Union. Now we have a sovereign state and, of course, the amendments that have been introduced into the constitution cannot now satisfy the objective realities existing in actual fact.

The meeting continues. We will tell you about it tomorrow, during the morning broadcasts.

Constitutional Commission Statute Endorsed

LD0502214192 Moscow TASS in English 1901 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow February 5 TASS—The Russian parliament's Council of Nationalities today endorsed the statute of the Constitutional Commission. The statute, earlier approved by the other chamber of the parliament, the Council of the Republic, is now considered effective as undersigned by the parliament.

The Constitutional Commission is to focus on drafting a new constitution and carrying out constitutional reform in Russia.

The commission is to ensure interaction on constitutional matters between bodies of state authority in republics within the Russian Federation, regions and autonomous areas.

The Constitutional Commission will maintain international relations in line with its competence.

Under the statute, the Constitutional Commission chairman and his deputy are to be elected by the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation.

CIS, Russian Armed Forces Bills Considered

LD0502224492 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1928 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Military news" section: "Bills To Define RF Armed Forces Establishment Procedure"—POSTFACTUM headline]

[Text] Moscow. The command of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces has prepared the Russian Federation draft law on defence providing for the establishment of the Russian Federation armed forces.

According to the sources from the Russian parliament the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet Committee on Defence and Security has received for further elaboration the draft law on defence prepared by the supreme command of the CIS Armed Forces and signed by Colonel-General Pavel Grachev. The deputies who read the document first of all paid attention to the fact that it specifically mentioned the armed forces of the Russian Federation to which a whole section was devoted.

A similar draft law on defence was submitted to the Committee on Defence and Safety by the Russian Federation president's state counsellor, General of the Army Konstantin Kobets.

Social Protection Program To Be Examined

LD0602111992 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 6 Feb 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Russian parliament today will examine the decision by the Cabinet of Ministers on social protection of the population. The document envisages a budget deficit amounting to 25 billion rubles, something which, in the view of many deputies, is tantamount to recoiling from market policies. There is a chance that the Russian parliament may reject the government program.

'National-State Formations' Creation Condemned

LD0502182792 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1120 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow, 5 Feb (TASS)—The decisions by congresses of public national movements to proclaim new national-state formations and to form alternative power bodies "do not reflect real public need, do not have a legal basis, and often contradict the valid Constitution of the Russian Federation and the constitutions of the republics which are part of Russia." This is set out in a statement issued today by the commission for the national-state structure and interethnic relations of the Russian parliament.

Similar actions, the document stresses, "may worsen interethnic relations, which have become more acute anyway during recent times, may ruin the radical economic reform, and may aggravate the real threat to the unity and integrity of the Russian Federation."

The decisions by the Tatar Kurultay congress which took place a few days ago, at which the aspiration was heard for the creation of an alternative, legitimately elected Supreme Soviet of the Tatar Republic—a Majlis—are described in the statement as an attempt to replace the legally elected authority. Similar steps had previously been taken by national movements in Kabardino-Balkariya and Karachayevo-Cherkessiya.

"Anti-constitutional steps must not under any circumstances be permitted, when to the delight of destructive forces national movements take upon themselves state functions which do not belong to them, weakening the legitimately elected authority and violating the territorial integrity of the republics of the Russian Federation," the document states. "Under these conditions we consider it the duty of the Russian Supreme Soviet to take constitutional measures to prevent the dangerous development of events in the country, proceeding from the fact that it is only possible to emerge from the crisis by uniting on the basis of complete equality of rights and trust, and only by relying on the norms of the law."

The statement contains an appeal to all national movements and their leaders not to permit any anti-constitutional actions which might lead to lawlessness, and to strictly draw a boundary between what is genuinely in the national interest and nationalism. Members of the commission also appealed to the supreme soviets, to the leaders of all republics within the Russian Federation, and to the law enforcement bodies that they should adopt exhaustive measures to prevent the escalation of interethnic dissension, and to ensure the safety and legal rights of all citizens of the Russian Federation.

Commission Terms Kazan Assembly Unconstitutional

OW0602043492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian parliament's commission on ethnic relations has qualified the public assembly held in Kazan recently as unconstitutional and as a step having no legal basis. According to the commission, the delegates' striving to form national congress as an alternative to Tatarstan's parliament might lead to aggravating ethnic tensions in the republic and heighten the threat to unity and territorial integrity in the Russian Federation.

In its statement the commission assessed in a similar way the steps taken by ethnic movements in Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo- Cherkessia, Chechen-Ingush and Adygeia.

Democratic Faction Protests Joint Resolution

OW0602113892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1054 GMT 6 feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The council of the bloc of democratic factions in Russia's parliament has expressed protest against the joint resolution on ensuring social security for the people and regulating the prices of some food products adopted on Monday by the parliament's presidium and government. In a statement published on Thursday [6 February] the bloc qualifies the resolution as unconstitutional, since it makes changes in taxation legislation and cuts the revenues by 25 billion rubles annually.

By adopting this resolution the presidium usurped the parliament's powers, the statement points out.

The council of the bloc of democratic factions urges the parliament to cancel the "presidium's unconstitutional resolution".

The two chambers of Russia's parliament will discuss the problem of the joint resolution at their plenary session on Thursday.

Regional Affairs

Chechen Authorities Set Up 'National Army'

LD0502234292 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Feb 92

["Novosti" report by correspondent M. Osokin]

[Text] The Soviet Army, which has become an army without a state, is being transformed into the property of individual republics. Military property is also being subjected to division. This process has become uncontrollable, and therefore especially dangerous in hotspots—first and foremost Transcaucasia. In the Chechen Republic, Dzhakhar Dudayev is setting up his own army.

[Osokin] Judging from the reports that have come in previously from the northern Caucasus, Chechen authorities have decided to set about transferring the military units stationed on the territory of the Chechen Republic to their colors, starting this week. The idea is for servicemen to swear an oath of loyalty to the Chechen Republic and to its president, Dudayev, on the Koran. It is true, though, that there are not a great many units who wish to swear an oath to the authorities in Groznyy. For the moment, in setting up a national army, they are having to make do with volunteers.

Weapons are being obtained by various methods. The simplest one is an attack on the barracks. But there are also more exotic methods. For example, 6,000 km from Groznyy, in the Far East, they are investigating deals relating to the sale of a hail missile launcher [raketnaya ustanovkha grad] to Chechen guardsmen, to the warrant officers of one of the units. Some say that they have already seen this launcher being transported around the Chechen Republic. A Japanese Toyota truck has been adapted to carry it.

There is a similar picture in other places on both sides of the Caucasus mountain range, almost everywhere. Some are seizing the weapons, others are buying them, and the authorities are trying to nationalize those military units that were at hand. The echo of this redistribution has already carried as far as to the West. A group of officers from units stationed in Azerbaijan have submitted a protest to the NATO servicemen's trade union that in Baku they are demanding that they take a new oath. The officers are hoping that the West will become an intermediary in this conflict. Well, now, perhaps in this situation those from abroad will help us.

Chechen Leader Views CIS Forces Withdrawal

OW0602002892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Chechen leader Dzhakhar Dudayev argues that he is aware of the secret order by Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth [of Independent States] Armed Forces Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov to withdraw military units of the former Soviet Union from the Chechen territory. Dudayev said this at his Tuesday's [4 February] meeting with journalists from St. Petersburg in Groznyy. According to spokesman of Dudayev's press service, Ruslan Tsebiyev, Dudayev said that the order urges the withdrawal even if the local population counteracts. Dudayev pointed out that the withdrawal will start February 8.

Chechen-Russian Recognition Talks Planned

PM0602114092 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Ali Kazikhanov report: "Russia and Chechnya To Hold Talks"]

[Text] Groznyy—The first meeting between delegations from the Russian parliament and the Chechen Republic may be held in Kiev in the near future. Questions of mutual recognition by the two states will be discussed.

As Yusup Soslanbekov, chairman of the republic parliament's foreign affairs committee, reported, "if there was no hope of success, talks would not have been arranged."

Sobchak on Yeltsin Visit, Economic Reform

PM0502161192 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No 4, 26 Jan 92 p 16

[Interview with St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak by correspondent Andrey Chernov; place and date not given: "Technology of Survival. Backdrop to President's Visit to St. Petersburg"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] Last week St. Petersburg was the last stop of the Russian president's first reform tour. The opinion of the city's press: Yeltsin came, he saw, but did he conquer? At any rate, nomenklatura bakers tried to double the price of bread the next day. This attempt failed. But questions remained, which our correspondent put to St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak.

[Chernov] Anatoliy Aleksandrovich, St. Petersburg newspapers are claiming that, on the day of the president's visit, white bread was sold only along the president's supposed route. Can this be believed?

[Sobchak] It cannot, because nobody knew where the president wanted to go. We had not the slightest wish to cordon off the "Potemkin villages." On the contrary, we warned the president: The question of supplying food to the city has reached the breaking point because all the normal sources of supply have been closed down. The Ukraine has simply not resumed deliveries, neither has the Baltic region. Emergency state measures must be taken. We offered Boris Nikolayevich a choice of three routes. But there could have been more. For example, his visit to the Kirov plant was not scheduled. But the people from Kirov met the president at the airport, and it was there that they decided with him on what they had agreed way back during Yeltsin's last visit....

[Chernov] Yes, and they say that the president was extremely surprised that the questions of conversion and tractor output, which had already been solved, must be solved again because the papers have gotten stuck somewhere in the government....

[Sobchak] I will go on. Everything was decided at the airport and the president did not visit the Kirov plant, although they had even organized an exhibition of their products in the avenue... We worked out several routes from the airport to the port....

[Chernov] Forgive me, but why?

[Sobchak] Because it was known that the national patriots and the United Front of Working People would try to wreck the visit and would maybe try to close the avenue. In that case we would have traveled by another route.

[Chernov] Anatoliy Aleksandrovich, but if the situation is so "revolutionary"....

[Sobchak] Do not worry. Had the president wanted to see something that was not on the program or nearby, we would have been able to check out any facility with the Federal Security Service and militia. Apart from our distinguished guest's security, we were also thinking about the time— his time and ours—because there was much to be said and decided.

[Chernov] And it was decided.

[Sobchak] It was. Above all the talk was of obtaining food on Western credits. Directly, moreover, without the mediation of Prodintorg [formerly the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade All-Union Association for the Export and Import of Food Products] foisted on us from above. Prodintorg promised to start deliveries at the end of February, but on such terms and at such prices that it became totally pointless. We would cope more quickly and more cheaply ourselves. The president understood and rid us of Prodintorg's services. Yeltsin also signed an ordinance transferring to the city the tens of thousands of tonnes of freight on our port's territory, which was awaiting its fate of being sent to Cuba. We also discussed the economic reform strategy. Back at the end of December, I said to both the president and Gaydar: You are predicting twofold or threefold price hikes, but I can see it being tenfold! Because I know the mentality of our monopoly producers, who will start making 1,000-percent profits!

Let us, finally, recall just the antialcohol campaign... What is bad about the struggle against drunkenness? Nothing. But in our system, an antialcohol decree cannot bring any good. After all, the system has not changed. After every week of reform, all its shortcomings must be scrutinized and corrections made. Enough material for correction has accumulated in 10 days of economic reform. That means the government, mayors of the largest Russian cities, and economic scientists must get together. Reform cannot be carried out without these discussions and corrections from the Kremlin. I told the president that value added tax on basic food products must be scrapped immediately. While the product is in the production process, the 28 percent is doubled and sometimes trebled! The consumer is horrified: He cannot buy that meat and that butter. This means either scrapping the tax or at least reducing it to 5 percent. Bread, meat, butter, and milk are not luxuries! Scrapping the tax would remove the main social tension! Our people are simply the most patient in the world. Take note, now nobody is talking about the fact that prices for furniture or electrical goods have become excessive and that it takes years of work to buy a refrigerator, not to mention a car! Tomorrow, of course, this will also become a problem. But not today!... It will be even easier with industrial goods: The market will operate there, and an unsold suit will become cheaper. But it is not so with food. A reduction of the volumes of production has already started. The closure of enterprises is next. This is happening during a total shortage of food. That means the reformers have made a mistake which, incidentally, it is not too late to correct now. But today, not tomorrow, when it will be too late.

[Chernov] And did the president agree with you?

[Sobchak] The president said that it must be thought over. But I know that Gaydar is against it. But the president agreed with my other proposal. This concerns the restriction on the profitability of output. Many enterprises today are operating at profitability of 100, 200, 300 percent! And there is no limit. So let us restrict profitability to only 50 percent. This will sharply reduce all prices. (We are, of course, talking about output intended for the domestic market). Simultaneously a ban must be introduced on including in the cost price items which simply have nothing to do with it. In the last few days before the new year, I met with sovkhoz directors who argued: A liter of milk costs 10 rubles [R], but 1 kilogram of sour cream costs R183. How so? They had included in the cost price... construction of dwelling houses and even of the palace of culture! General overheads were fixed at 600 percent! Why? How can this be so in military-industrial enterprises but not in ours?... This is the level on which prices are calculated in our country. But because they are state enterprises we can say: Let us introduce restrictions on profitability. Incidentally, this will assist the privatization process, because there will be no restrictions on privatized enterprises. It is another matter that the private enterprise owner himself will not ask a more exorbitant price than his neighbor. There is no need for external restrictions on private enterprise owners: The market will restrict them. Incidentally, restricting the profitability of state enterprises is customary in civilized countries.

This is the only way that offers a real chance to implement reform and switch to the market, and, at the same time, to correct the obvious mistakes by our young government of reforms. In shock therapy, the accent must still be put on the therapy and not the shock. A person dies if the shock is too prolonged, and a dead person does not require treatment. In conditions when privatization is just beginning, when land reform has not yet been implemented, I see no other way. (Let us recall that, before the transition to the market, Hungary and Poland pursued a privatization policy for 10 and eight years respectively). No, privatization too must be carried out intelligently so as not to be reminiscent, for instance, of Stalin-style collectivization.

[Chernov] Could that really happen?

[Sobchak] It could. Moderation and restrictions are needed here; otherwise, the mafia will simply buy up everything. We in St. Petersburg do not intend to release everything at auctions, because we know that if the Communist Party mafia is replaced by just the mafia (they are often the same people!), nothing will change and society will not straighten itself out. The preferential right to privatization should belong to the labor collective. Only if it declines can we talk about an auction, where enterprises and the city's citizens should have preference. Why? Because otherwise our property will be bought up by the citizens of those CIS states to which the ruble is already becoming a burden.

[Chernov] Anatoliy Aleksandrovich, you are a member of the Supreme Consultative Council under the president, but unless I am mistaken, its last session was in October. Now, talking about the president's visit, you are digressing into your own reflections all the time. Is this not because you have no way of expounding your thoughts other than enticing him as a guest?

[Sobchak] You are not right. We communicate regularly, but you know, when you come to Moscow you must inevitably leave. Then your proposals are canceled at a stroke by somebody in the president's entourage. So I am glad that Boris Nikolayevich came himself and saw the whole gravity of the situation. It still seems to me that, without weekly meetings between the government and leaders of major industrial centers and eminent economists, reform will not progress; it will degenerate into the usual Kremlin "campaign." We are not just talking about reform. In foreign policy, too, we are for some reason merely making up lost ground now, while other former republics are setting the tone.

Yakutia To Remain in Russian Federation

LD0602025492 Moscow TASS in English
1035 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] Yakutsk February 5 (ITAR-TASS)—The Yakut-Sakha News Agency (YASIA) has refuted rumours that began to circulate in the Russian parliament and the press, to the effect that it allegedly itends to withdraw from Russia.

A YASIA statement sent to ITAR-TASS says that the current tenth session of the Yakut parliament stated clearly and unequivocally: "The republic of Sakha (Yakutia), which is a sovereign state integrated in the Russian Federation, favours treaty-based relations with the Russian Federation and finds it necessary to bring closer the beginning of talks between an official delegation of the republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and the leadership of the Russian Federation on concluding a treaty about the fundamentals of interstate relations...." "Another resolution of the current session says that Yakutia came out for concluding a federal treaty between Russia and subjects of the federation.

Tatarstan's Role in Religious Conflicts Viewed

OW0602011992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1908 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Tatarstan may pose as a go-between in possible Christian and Muslim conflicts, believes chairman of milli-mejlis (national parliament) Talgat Abdullin. He told IF [INTERFAX] that the issue of Tatarstan's position in conflict situations had been touched on during Moscow talks between Tatarstan vice-president Vasili Likhachev and U.S. embassy on Tuesday [4 February].

Abdullin emphasized that in the opinion of the U.S., Tatarstan was a state bordering on the Muslim and the Christian world. The republic should be neutral in any Muslim-Christian conflict, said Abdullin.

Kemerovo Groups Demand Yeltsin Resignation

PM0502133592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 3 Feb 92 p 1

[PRAVDA-ITAR-TASS-URAL-AKTSEPT report under the general heading "Newsbeat"]

[Text] The newspaper KUZNETSKIY KRAY has published a statement by the leaders of six Kemerovo sociopolitical organizations of different persuasions containing an appeal for the creation of a movement to secure the immediate resignation of Russian President B. Yeltsin and his "team." Yeltsin stands accused of establishing "authoritarian bureaucratic" rule, and the Russian Government, of introducing "extortionate" prices. In the opinion of the authors of the statement, early elections to Russia's legislative and representative organs could provide a counterweight to looming dictatorship.

Udmurt Deputies To View Ties With Russia

LD0502131892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0700 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Excerpt] The Udmurt Supreme Soviet resumes its work in Izhevsk today. Legislators are to discuss yet again the main issues of the agenda, including draft treaties between Udmurtia and the Russian Federation, the main directions of government work, and the budget. [passage omitted]

Kemerovo Oblast Chairman Announces Resignation

LD0602033192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1300 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] At the session which has opened in Kemerovo, Tuleyev, chairman of the oblast soviet, has announced his resignation. Our correspondent Sergey Soltemakov reports:

[Soltemakov] The announcement seems to have come as a surprise both to those who share his views and those who oppose Tuleyev. In it he set forth in detail the reasons why he made this decision. Tuleyev disagrees with the policy of reforms being pursued by the state leadership. The calculation that there will be people's capitalism in Russia—I am quoting from his statement—is deceit. The road on which the government is taking us today is a road to nowhere. What is happening in Russia now I think—Tuleyev continued—is a taunt to the people. Neither my convictions nor my conscience permit me to take part in this experiment. I do not consider it possible to direct the implementation of a soulless and amoral policy. May my resignation, he concluded, be a protest against the destruction of Soviet power, too.

Nevertheless, Tuleyev made it understood to his supporters among the deputies and electors that he does not intend to leave the political arena and give up the struggle. For local observers, this justifies their opinion that the statement is made with a long-range goal: He now has openly taken a stand in opposition to the president, the government, and in part the Supreme Soviet, but his risk, in the opinion of local observers, is not large, especially because his resignation has not been accepted. In addition, he is not alone in opposition today, in the Kuzbass and Siberia and in the center.

One deputy tried in vain to convince his colleagues of the need to accept the resignation of the chairman of the soviet. Otherwise, in his opinion, others besides Tuleyev will go over to the opposition. But they listened to the opinion of another deputy who said Tuleyev was obliged to stay in office and fight against the policy which the president and government are pursuing. How this proposal will affect the work of the session will no doubt be shown by its decisions.

Chuvash Mission Formed To Ensure Cooperation

PM0502140192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 3 Feb 92 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report from the "Official Section" roundup: "Appointments"]

[Text] A mission of the president of the Russian Federation in the Chuvash SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic] has been formed by Decree of the President of the Russian Federation for the purpose of ensuring cooperation between the supreme organs of executive power of the Russian Federation and the Chuvash SSR. Nikolay Arkhipovich Zaytsev has been appointed permanent representative of the Russian Federation president in the Chuvash SSR.

Vladimir Aleksandrovich Barabanov has been appointed head of the administration of Bryansk Oblast by decree of the Russian Federation president.

By decree of the Russian Federation president, the following appointments have been made;

Viktor Vladimirovich Bolotnov has been appointed head of the administration of the city of Birobidzhan, Jewish Autonomous Oblast;

Boris Valeryevich Upadyshev has been appointed head of the administration of the city of Vologda, Vologda Oblast;

Aleksandr Vasilyevich Prokofyev has been appointed head of the administration of the city of Pskov, Pskov Oblast.

By order of the Russian Federation president, Aleksandr Petrovich Kozlov has been appointed deputy chief of the Control Administration [kontrolnoye upravleniye] of the Russian Federation President's Administration [administratsiya].

Novosibirsk Rally Protests 'Plundering'

PM0602115592 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Siberians Protest"]

[Text] Novosibirsk—Approximately 2,000 people gathered for a rally under the slogan "For reforms but against plundering of the people" convened by the oblast trade union federation yesterday. At the rally it was said that a particularly complex situation has now taken shape at the city's enterprises of the defense industry. More than one-third of the capacities are lying idle, and output worth tens of millions of rubles has built up in the warehouses because it has not been bought up by the client. Dismissal threatens 20-25 percent of workers at the "Sibselmash" and "Luch" Associations and at plants.

'15,000' Novosibirsk Scientists May Lose Jobs

PM0602094792 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 30 Jan 92

["Vesti" report by V. Tyabotin and A. Tsevitskiy from Novosibirsk]

[Text] [Tyabotin] In view of the Siberian scientists' unenviable position, local wits pronounce the acronym SORAN, which stands for Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences, only as "sto ran," meaning "100 wounds." I have no intention of assessing the number of ailments which afflict the collective of the Novosibirsk scientific center, but in my opinion they will hardly be cured by the surgical intervention of the Ministry of Science, which has promised to cut staffing by one-third. That means 15,000 scientific staffers in the world-famous Novosibirsk scientific community alone.

Is it possible in general to speak about the health of the once-powerful organism given the current intensifying brain drain? Although the current leadership of the Academy is pretending that nothing disastrous is happening, it would be wrong to console oneself with the illusion that the hundreds of world-class theoreticians who are emigrating—and they are mainly physicists and mathematicians—will ever return.

Russia's president promised during a visit to Novosibirsk that funds for academic science will be found even in the most difficult times. Admittedly, the funds have not yet materialized. Perhaps this is because less than three years have passed since the promise was made, or perhaps the most difficult times have not yet arrived.

So no treatment is available for the time being, but the patient must carry on hoping.

Magadan Miners Threaten To Strike

OW0502133192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1134 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Miners of the Magadan region are ready to support demands of Yakutian gold-prospectors and stop extracting and dispatching precious metals, chairman of the regional working committee of miners Yovgony Zhurkin told IF [INTERFAX] on Wednesday [5 February].

According to him, a telegram was sent to the Russian president and the Russian Supreme Soviet saying that if the government does not meet the demands of gold miners they reserve the right to go on a strike. The miners demand to increase gold prices up to the world level and pay 20 per cent of their wages in coins containing 1.35 grammes. They also require to retain privileges for gold miners in case of their moving to other states of the Commonwealth.

Nuclear Physics Center Becomes Free Economic Zone

LD0202053292 Moscow Oblast Radio in Russian 0320 GMT 23 Jan 92

[Text] Dubna, the world center of nuclear physics, is receiving the status of the first free economic zone of Moscow Oblast. This will become a new impulse for the rapid harmonic growth of the town, whose international scientific ties are famous. So far, monetary funds have gone into the republican budget. Under the new situation, they will be used in the interests of the scientific associations and industrial enterprises.

International Affairs

Kravchuk: Yeltsin Failed To Consult on Arms

PM0602093192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 4 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 2

[ITAR-TASS report on interview with Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk by LA STAMPA; place and date not given: "'Yeltsin Did Not Consult With Me,' Ukrainian President Stated Apropos Russian President's New Disarmament Initiatives"]

[Text] The Italian newspaper LA STAMPA has published an interview with Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk under the headline "Russian Disarmament Does Not Concern Us." Speaking about the Russian president's initiatives in the field of disarmament, he stated in particular:

[Kravchuk] Yeltsin did not consult with me, he acted autonomously. His decisions are provoking considerable concern here and are giving rise to serious questions. First: He stated that strategic missiles no longer are targeted on America and the West. The question arises: On whom are they now targeted? We would like to know what the new targets are. Second: On the issue of space-based defense [kosmicheskaya oborona] with the United States, the question arises: Against whom will this be directed? Against France, Britain, or the Ukraine? Third: Whereas we decided to establish a national army, Russia did not. The strategic weapons belong to the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. So how can the Russian president cut weapons he does not have? I fully agree with the cuts in principle, but it is essential to discuss everything with everybody, and not act unilaterally. We will talk about all this at the meeting of CIS heads of state in Minsk on 14 February.

[LA STAMPA] What problems will you raise?

[Kravchuk] First: Why is Yeltsin speaking on our behalf without consulting us? This is not right. Second: Before taking any initiative affecting the other republics, he should discuss it with us; only then may he go public with it. I do not recognize faits accomplis. I do not recognize the things he stated and discussed at that time. Our strategic potential may not be very great, but it is not up to him to decide its fate. The Ukraine has its own policy: To eliminate all tactical nuclear weapons by this June and all strategic weapons in the course of 1994, thus achieving nonnuclear status. [Kravchuk ends]

Moving on to the problem of the Black Sea Fleet, L. Kravchuk stated that "Yeltsin has changed his mind on this matter: In Ulyanovsk he declared that the Black Sea Fleet is Russian. In Novorossiysk he said the fleet belongs to the CIS. For its part, the Ukraine is not laying claim to the entire fleet. Just as it has never stated a desire to administer the Baltic, Northern, and Pacific Fleets. However, there are Russian chauvinists who would like to see the St. Andrew's cross flying from every ship in the Black Sea. This problem is being whipped up by various parties, in particular the fleet commander, but I hope we will resolve it; we have set up a mixed commission."

[LA STAMPA] Will the commission discuss the Crimean problem as well?

[Kravchuk] This has been ruled out. No legal basis exists to discuss it. Yeltsin has stated that Russia has no territorial claims on the Ukraine. The Crimean population is in favor of being part of the Ukraine with the rights of an autonomous area.

[LA STAMPA] Is it your intention to introduce your own national currency in place of the ruble?

[Kravchuk] Of course. We are already doing this. A Canadian firm is preparing our currency, the hryvna, which we are introducing this summer. [Kravchuk ends]

L. Kravchuk also said that it is theoretically possible to imagine a single economic area in the CIS, but this no longer exists in the Ukraine. Without breaking away from the other republics, we will attempt to join the European structure on both the economic and political levels.

In conclusion, the Ukrainian president said: "Russian Vice President Rutskoy and his supporters would like to restore the centralized power of the USSR, destroy anything new, and return to the past. They are stating that economic, political, and financial war already is being waged between Russia and the Ukraine, but we do not share this opinion. The Ukraine is hostile to no one."

Defense Official Welcomes Yeltsin Initiative

MK0602123092 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 6 Feb 92 p 3

[Vladimir Skachko interview with Lieutenant General Ivan Bizhan, deputy defense minister of Ukraine: "Ivan Bizhan: 'I Welcome the Initiatives of Boris Yeltsin'"]

[Text] Lieutenant General Ivan Bizhan, deputy defense minister of Ukraine and leader of the Ukrainian group of experts at negotiations with Russia on a complete range of military issues, is convinced that Ukraine should create its own armed forces, but only to safeguard its own sovereignty, not in order to transform itself into a military monster.

[Skachko] On the eve of his foreign trip, Russian president Boris Yeltsin announced a major arms reduction initiative, to include nuclear arms. How do you, a representative of military leaders, regard this announcement?

[Bizhan] Positively. And this is why. The Ukraine's position on the issue of nuclear disarmament is well-known. By 1 July of this year we should be rid of tactical nuclear weapons, and we should be free of strategic nuclear weapons by the end of 1994. I welcome the initiative of Boris Yeltsin, as it coincides with the Ukraine's position. In addition, it would be much better if the tactical weapons removed from Ukraine to Russia were not put into storage, but instead destroyed. It is beneficial for any state's security not to have a strong nuclear neighbor.

[Skachko] Do you have any information indicating that tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine are being destroyed in Russia?

[Bizhan] There is no hard evidence. In accordance with the agreement, we are at present removing weapons from the territory of the Ukraine and leaving them at special bases before final destruction. Whether or not destruction has begun I do not know, as the issue of control over this process has not been fully resolved.

[Skachko] In accordance with the Ukrainian-Russian communique of 11 January 1992, the sides agreed to form groups of experts to work on military issues and committed themselves to refrain from taking unilateral steps in this area. Are these obligations being met?

[Bizhan] I can say with complete confidence on behalf of the Ukrainian side that we have not permitted a single such unilateral action. What is being done in Ukraine in the military sphere is in complete compliance with our legislation and with agreements on armed forces and border troops signed in Minsk on 30 December of last year.

[Skachko] Can one assume from this that you have some reason for reproaching your Russian colleagues?

[Bizhan] Yes, one can unfortunately do so. Let us take, for example, the Black Sea Fleet. As far as I know, people's deputies of the Russian Federation have already gone there and conducted business. We now have reports that even new recruits—Ukrainians—are being prevented from swearing allegiance to the Ukraine; disciplinary measures are being taken against them. There is pressure on naval officers who have sworn allegiance to the Ukraine or wish to do so. Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov has issued a special appeal on this to servicemen and commanders of the Black Sea Fleet.

[Skachko] There is now talk that Boris Yeltsin went to Novorossiysk to reach agreement on the issue of shifting the Black Sea Fleet there, where construction of new naval bases was begun a year ago.

[Bizhan] I would proceed from the fact that Novorossiysk is Russian Federation territory. The Black Sea Fleet is also there, not just in Ukrainian Sevastopol. But Yeltsin's visit does raise questions. For example, why was he escorted by CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] armed forces chief Marshal Shaposhnikov, and why was this done when our groups of experts are working on the issue of dividing the Black Sea fleet between CIS strategic forces and the Ukrainian fleet? I do not believe Yeltsin's visit will bring about a quicker solution to this complex problem. But it is difficult to tie this visit to shifting the Black Sea fleet to Novorossiysk. It would be nearly impossible within a short period of time to build a base there for the Black Sea Fleet comparable to the ones in Sevastopol and Crimea.

Kravchuk Returns From Germany, Remarks on Ties

LD0602000692 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Leonid Makarovych Kravchuk returned to Kiev yesterday. An improvised news conference took place at Boryspil airport in the immediate vicinity of the aircraft.

[Begin recording] [Kravchuk] I can say as a general appraisal that both the president of Germany and the federal chancellor of Germany—and at the official news conference which took place at the end of the visit—everybody agreed that Bonn, the Federal Republic of Germany, intends to have the closest of relations with Ukraine in all spheres. This includes economic, diplomatic, political, cultural, and others. We were received as an independent state, with all the diplomatic formalities. But that's not the point. The fact of the matter lies in the sincerity and frankness and the desire with which German business circles wish to have dealings with the Ukraine.

I had a meeting today with all the parties, or nearly all the parties in Germany. Yesterday there was a meeting with the president of the Federal Republic of Germany. Today I had a meeting with Germany's chancellor, with journalists and business circles, and nowhere, I stress, nowhere, did I feel even the slightest degree of disrespect toward the Ukraine. Everybody said that the Ukraine is one of those states that should be first in the European Community; that it should be one of the first to be in the Council of Europe; and should be one of the first in financial, economic, and other structures in the West.

[Unidentified correspondent] Were any concrete agreements reached?

[Kravchuk] Of course. First we agreed that a representative of the chancellor on matters of foreign debt will be coming to our republic in the near future. A representative of the chancellor will be coming, (?a state) secretary, to resolve the question of resettling Germans. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] Leonid Makarovych, I'm from Vesti, Russian Television. What are the prospects for Russian-Ukrainian relations in the future?

[Kravchuk, answers in Russian] I think that no matter how much political and other forces in Russia may try—and there are such forces in the Ukraine, too—to make two great peoples with a very large common history disagree, they will not succeed. Even the Russian parliament, which has put the dubious question of reviewing the Act of 1954 will also not change the situation on the whole, because there are no legal foundations for this. [passage omitted] I am convinced that a Russian, even in his thoughts, will never raise his hand against a Ukrainian, just as a Ukrainian will never do so against a Russian, because we have been together for 350, or to be more accurate, 500 years. When I am asked how are the Russians in the Ukraine, it's difficult for me even to say. Do you see? Because this...[changes thought] Can you really divide 12 million Russians in this way today? Can you take it so simply as to say: Well, I'm a Russian. Where are they? They're in Kiev, Kharkov, and Chernigov. They're in Lvov and they're in Chernovtsy. It's impossible to do this. Therefore, if people were guided by the lofty principles of humanism they would simply not raise this at the Supreme Soviet. I understand the principle that something raised needs to be resolved, but I put my trust in the wisdom of Russian democrats; in the wisdom of those democrats who, in the distant past, or perhaps their grandfathers or great-grandfathers, redeemed our [poet] Shevchenko from the bondage of serfdom. They will not allow us to fall out over this present-day difficult, very difficult, situation. I am sure of this. [end recording]

Further on Germany Aid Promises

PM0602102292 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Sergey Guk report: "Kravchuk Comes Back From Germany With Promises of Aid"]

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has no grounds for dissatisfaction with his visit to the FRG. He was received with all possible honors at the highest level. Kiev's readiness to observe earlier disarmament treaties and its renunciation of its own nuclear forces made a suitable impression on Bonn. The invitation to Soviet Germans to settle in the Ukraine, made on the eve of the trip, was assessed in the FRG as a skillful diplomatic move.

In the rivalry between Moscow and Kiev in seeking Germany's favor, Kiev is currently in the lead: They paid Kravchuk the compliment of holding him up as an example to the other CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] heads on how to tackle the problems of national minorities.

Germany will help the Ukraine, and that includes help in developing its ties with the EC. That is for the future. In the meantime concrete questions of bilateral cooperation will be tackled by a German-Ukrainian commission. Foreign Minister A. Zlenko here took an apparently small, but in fact very useful step: He lifted all formalities for trips by FRG citizens to Ukraine. From 15 February any German can obtain a visa actually at the border, without red tape. That is what businessmen want: They do not like wasting time waiting weeks for permission to enter the country.

Only the German press gave the guest from Kiev a less ceremonial reception than the politicians. I am not talking about trivial barbs such as reminders of the Ukrainian president's party-nomenklatura past or his conduct during the putsch. There were more substantial reproaches: Kravchuk, with his military ambition, is an inconvenient partner who is causing harm to an already unstable CIS (the president himself sought to demonstrate, at a news conference, that it is not he who is complicating the situation, but "certain circles in the Russian Government and parliament"). The situation that has arisen is causing concern to Bonn, which has an interest in stability on the territory of the former USSR—disintegration entails the threat of dire consequences to the prosperous West. Ukraine must also show that it is not only a convenient partner (primarily by virtue of its geopolitical situation), but also a reliable debtor. Otherwise Kiev cannot count on German subsidies.

This was the tone adopted by prestigious newspapers which receive confidential information from Bonn's government offices. By all appearances, German politicians do indeed feel concern. Along with the desire, in time, to put down deep roots in the Ukraine and exert a calming influence on its leaders, thereby stabilizing the situation in the CIS as a whole.

That is what the German "maximum program" for the foreseeable future looks like. And not only Germany, but the whole of the West has a vital interest not in fueling differences among members of an as yet far from stable Commonwealth, but in smoothing them over.

Kravchuk Meets With Norwegian Foreign Minister

OW0602004992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1908 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk said that his republic sought to develop relations both with the western countries and the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] during his February 5 meeting with Norwegian foreign minister in Kiev. Kravchuk said that Ukraine already has a legislative infrastructure to attract western business and to form own banking and credit structures.

We share some common problems, sometimes quite thorny ones, but this is normal, said Kravchuk. The main thing is that all problems should be resolved at the negotiating table.

Kravchuk said that Ukraine sought membership in European structures and international agencies and has already submitted its proposals concerning its admission into the European Council, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and IMF.

Kravchuk emphasized that the Black Sea impasse should be resolved via negotiations. Today a Ukrainian-Russian commission is working to develop a mutually acceptable solution.

Diplomatic Relations Established With Norway

LD0502233592 Moscow TASS in English
1939 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Alexey Trotsenko for TASS]

[Text] Kiev February 5 TASS—Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and Norwegian Foreign Minister Thorvald Stoltenberg today signed a protocol opening diplomatic relations between the two countries at the level of embassies.

Ukraine is a country of importance for Europe, Stoltenberg said after signing the protocol. "We recognise Ukraine as an independent state and will exchange ambassadors soon, which will open additional opportunities for cooperation in many fields. [no closing quotation marks received]

The Norwegian foreign minister then met President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine to discuss the further development of comprehensive relations between the two countries and had a conversation with Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko to decide on specific ways of developing these relations.

Kravchuk Meets With Italian Foreign Minister

PM0502160892 Rome LA REPUBBLICA
in Italian 30 Jan 92 p 3

[Alberto Flores d'Arcais report: "De Michelis Consults Kiev Leaders"]

[Text] The future of the Black Sea Fleet was the main topic in Foreign Minister De Michelis' talks in Kiev, our correspondent Alberto Flores d'Arcais reports from the Ukrainian capital:

The Black Sea will be completely nuclear free. This is what Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told Gianni De Michelis in the talks that our foreign minister had in Kiev yesterday. De Michelis visited the capital of the Commonwealth of Independent States' [CIS] second—in both size and power—republic to sign with his opposite number, Zlenko, the official document establishing diplomatic relations between Italy and the Ukraine. Our new ambassador, Vittorio Surdo, was also presented at the ceremony: "I do not know whether he will receive your official approval, but here he is, anyway," De Michelis joked.

But it was at his meeting with Kravchuk that the Italian foreign minister received the most important message: the assurance that the Ukraine will ban all nuclear weapons—tactical ones this year and strategic ones by the end of 1994—and that the Black Sea Fleet—both the Ukraine's and the part that will remain under the CIS' unified command—will not carry any nuclear devices.

In the morning De Michelis met in Moscow with Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev. Their talks centered mainly on CIS internal political topics and on the current "conflict" between Ukraine and Russia over control of the Black Sea fleet.

Details of Oil, Gas Deal With Iran Noted

PM0602142992 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 4 Feb 92 p 1

[O. Musafirova report carried under general heading "Rivers of Oil, Sovereign Shores": "Meanwhile... Ukraine: East—A Shrewd Deal"]

[Text] Kiev—The Ukraine's hopes for Russian oil diminish with every passing day. Prime Minister Vitold Fokin remarked at a news conference that instead of 40 million tonnes of oil, only 6.5 million tonnes have been confirmed by contracts. Moreover, even these agreements are not being fulfilled. Therefore, it has been decided to look for new partners in the Near East.

On 29 January an agreement was signed in Kiev between Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In accordance with this agreement, 3 billion [as published] cubic meters of gas and more than 4 million tonnes of oil will be delivered to the Ukraine via Azerbaijan already this year. Moreover, the oil will be sold at average world prices, and gas will be even cheaper. Signing the agreement on the Ukrainian side, first vice premier Konstantin Masik announced that eventually gas deliveries will grow to 75 million cubic meters a year, and oil deliveries to 50-70 million tonnes.

True, the good news is being clouded by a certain rumor which appears from time to time in the local press. Allegedly, the Near East oil contains many corrosive sulphur compounds, and Soviet purification technology does not enable these compounds to be eliminated.

National Affairs

Kravchuk Annuls Price Liberalization

LD0502151192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1100 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has issued a decree that introduces state-regulated prices in the republic. The liberalization of prices is thereby annulled. Russia is now not traveling the same path as the Ukraine with regard to the tactics and strategy of carrying out economic reform. I will remind you that the main goal is the transition to market relations.

Official Notes 'Anti-Ukrainian' TV Campaign

LD0602110792 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Video report by correspondent V. Lyaskalo; including recorded interview with M.M. Spis, chairman of the commission for publicity and news media of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, in Kiev on 4 February; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Today there was a routine plenary session of the fifth session of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet and the situation in the Crimea was raised. Vasiliy Durdenets, first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, who was chairing the session, reassured the deputies. He reported that a group of Presidium members is departing for the Crimea tomorrow. They will work together with the deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Crimean Autonomous Republic there, and the session will discuss the situation in the Crimea after they return.

Calls are increasingly heard from this auditorium for the number of television broadcasts to be reduced, in particular to even shut down Channel One. What do you think? Is this a serious problem. Can the Ukraine do without Channel One?

[Spis] Well, lately many people's deputies, speaking here in this session auditorium, have been expressing their concern regarding the information being broadcast on Central Television, naturally distorted information. I do not think that we will adopt some decisions regarding this today or tomorrow, although they are not to be excluded in the future. It is very important that Channel One indeed be the Commonwealth's channel, because currently that channel is a Russian one and in practice we learn very little about the life, about those processes that are occurring today in the other countries of the Commonwealth. That it is little is one thing, but as far as the Ukraine is concerned, an anti-Ukrainian campaign has indeed been unleashed which benefits neither the Russian nor the Ukrainian peoples. And here we would simply like to cooperate so that the information which is on television should be objective and should just strengthen our Commonwealth.

Supreme Soviet Reaches Agreement With Crimea

LD0602144792 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] After talks between the delegations of the Supreme Soviets of Ukraine and the Crimea ended, a communique was signed in the Crimea. Demarcation of powers between the Ukraine and the Crimea will be carried out in the near future. The Ukrainian leadership believes that offering greater independence to the Crimea will either disrupt the referendum on independence or a result of the referendum will be negative, the KHARKOV NOVOSTI Agency reports.

Kiev Military Commander on Forces Formation

LD0602022192 Kiev Radio Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] The commander of the Kiev Military District, Lt.-Gen. Valentin Boryskin, pointed out that the formation of the armed forces of the Ukraine is a rightful process which complies with the interests of sovereign Ukraine. The formation of the national army is taking place on a legal basis, which makes the military servicemen certain of their future. Valentin Boryskin was nominated to the post of the commander of the Kiev Military District by the Ukraine president after his predecessor refused to swear allegiance to the Ukraine.

Nuclear Plant Resumes Work After 'Fault'

LD0502155492 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1459 GMT 5 Feb 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Vladimir Yeremenko]

[Text] Zaporozhye, 5 Feb (TASS)— Power set No. 1 of the Zaporozhye Atomic Power Station [AES] was switched off from the power supply late in the evening of 4 February because of a fault in the oil feed system of main circulation pump No. 4. It proved possible to fix the defect after several hours, and by 0300 today work had begun on bringing the reactor installation down to the minimum controllable level of power.

The UKRINFORM correspondent was told at the Zaporozhye AES Information Center that there was no violation of the limits and conditions of operation. On the international scale the event was qualified as even below the range of the scale. The radiation situation at Zaporozhye AES is within normal limits.

Coal Output, Price Liberalization Assessed

PM0602101792 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 2100 GMT 31 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast: Report by G. Kondaurov and Li Din Khvan]

[Text] [Announcer] The situation in the mining regions is precariously balanced on the brink of strikes, which could have serious and grave effects not only on the economic but also on the political situation in the country.

[Kondaurov] The first month's work in the Ukraine's mines since the liberalization of coal prices did not produce the anticipated stabilization. Output continues to plummet. Despite government predictions of a ten- or twenty-fold price increase, the price per tonne of coal has increased by a factor of 50, or even 100. Consumers do not have the money to settle such accounts. Many simply refuse to pay for such expensive coal. Miners may be left without wages. But even these high prices do not cover the rising cost of coal production. In these complex conditions, the trade union committees and strike committees consider that a strike would be very unwise, but they are opposed to a government proposal for doing away with subsidies to the coal industry.

[K.G. Fesenko, chairman of the Coal Industry Workers Trade Unions' Council] All the world's developed countries maintain their coal industry with subsidies. Suffice it to quote one example: Spain's 9-million-tonne coal output benefits from subsidies totaling 69 billion pesetas. But we are only talking about a total of 9.5 million tonnes. In our case it would be a question of 146 million tonnes produced with zero subsidies—the whole idea is quite absurd. If it is implemented, our first demand will be for a fifty-fold increase in wages against the April 1991 level.

Content of New Publication Detailed

AU0502143392 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 24 Jan 92 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Reinforcement of the Independent Press"]

[Text] Yet another issue of the newspaper NESKORENA NATSIYA [A Recalcitrant Nation], published by the all-Ukrainian political association "Ukrainian State Independence" [USI], has appeared.

Apart from the information on the activity of the USI, it carries an investigation by the Kiev scientist O. Bratko-Kutynskyy on the sources of national ideology, an article by O. Novak, chairman of the Rivno Ukrainian Republican Party organization, on the trends of development of the nation, an article by V. Shkuratyuk, deputy chairman of the USI, "Where Are You, Our Dzhakhar Dudayev?", and a manifesto "What Type of Ukraine Do We Want?" The newspaper continues the publication of the book by P. Shtepa, "The Ukrainian and the Muscovite Are Two Opposites." One of the pages is dedicated to the memory of Olena Antoniv, a Ukrainian patriot who died tragically on 2 October 1986. The issue carries a selection of letters to the editorial board from Norilsk, Novosybirsk, Kerch, Makiyivka, and other places pointing to facts of violation of the national rights of Ukrainians both in our country and outside its borders.

The issue uses materials prepared by members of various political organizations—the OUN [Association of Ukrainian Nationalists], the USI, the Ukrainian Nationalist Union, and the Ukrainian Republican Party.

Roman Koval is the editor of the periodical.

Radio Station Broadcasts in Yiddish

LD0602021492 Moscow TASS in English 1251 GMT 4 Feb 92

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Vladimir Pelekh]

[Text] Chernovtsy February 4 TASS—Jews living in Bukovina, western Ukraine, can now listen to radio broadcasts in Yiddish. A special editing collegium has been set up at the local teleradio committee to prepare programmes in Yiddish.

The collegium includes scholars, artists and men-of-letters who are well versed in Yiddish and cooperate with journalists on a voluntary basis.

This is the next step in promoting the development of Jewish culture in the region, where a Jewish school opened recently and a newspaper in Yiddish is published regularly.

Kazakhstan

Republic Reportedly Plans To Sell Weapons

LD0602062692 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0500 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] The Kazakhstan information agency DANA-PRESS, citing business circles, reports the sensational news that Kazakhstan intends to sell weapons through an exchange system. Negotiations already are under way with one exchange, Pax Alisa. Neither official sources nor Pax Alisa have yet refuted this information.

Further on Talks With Germany's Moellemann

Leaders View Disarmament Issues

OW0502130792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1134 GMT 5 feb 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has said there should be no haste in resolving disarmament issues. Such problems require consultations with military experts and coordination with all CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] members, he said on Wednesday [5 February] at a meeting with the German Economics Minister Juergen Moellemann in Alma-Ata. With reference to the latest disarmament initiatives of the Russian President Boris Yeltsin N. Nazarbayev said that "unfortunately there is a very long distance between the essentially sound ideas underlying them and their implementation".

As INTERFAX's correspondent was told at N. Nazarbayev's press service, the German side displayed interest in the state of affairs in the CIS and in the ways to resolve problems faced by ethnic Germans living in Kazakhstan.

The Kazakh president said: What should be done in the first place to stabilize the situation in the territory of the former USSR is lift restrictions, licensing and quotas in commodity exchanges between CIS members. According to N. Nazarbayev, all CIS members should join the agreement on lifting such restrictions signed between Kazakhstan and Russia.

With reference to the problem of ethnic Germans living in Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev said that Alma-Ata and Bonn should conclude a separate agreement on this issue.

(The meeting between N. Nazarbayov and J. Moellemann in covered in detail in today's edition of our "Presidential Bulletin").

Economics Cooperation Council Set Up

LD0602045592 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 0200 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] A German government delegation headed by Economics Minster Juergen Moellemann arrived in Alma-Ata yesterday. The delegation, consisting of German business representatives, was received by Prime Minister Tereshchenko. During the talks they discussed possibilities of bilateral relationships. At the suggestion of the guests they discussed the possibility of setting up Kazakh-German cooperation council to promote business relationships between our countries and to speed up reforms in Kazakhstan. This idea was also supported by a German suggestion to send market economy specialists here and to open a representative bureau working along the same lines.

It was noted that Kazakhstan has sufficient amounts of agricultural products and can manage without humanitarian aid from foreign countries. The prime minister emphasized the demand for new technological lines and plants for processing agricultural produce. They had also preliminary talks on opening the new Alma-Ata-Frankfurt air route. Kazakhstan was also invited to participate in the forthcoming conference of ministers of economics, trade, and industry of European countries and the United States on finding new and efficient ways of economic cooperation between East and West.

Leaders View Ethnic Issues

LD0502160992 Berlin ADN in German 1430 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Excerpts] Alma-Ata (ADN)—Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and German Minister of Economic Affairs Juergen Moellemann discussed the situation of the Russian ethnic Germans in the republic and disarmament problems at their meeting in Alma-Ata on Wednesday. Some 2 million ethnic German citizens live Kazakhstan. As INTERFAX reported, citing the president's press service, Nazarbayev supported the signing of a separate agreement between Kazakhstan and Germany on this issue. [passage omitted]

Moellemann also had talks in the Kazakh capital with Deputy Prime Minister Kalyk Abdullayev. The German politician has now traveled on to Kiev for economic talks. On 6 February he will have talks with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk.

Government Forms Social Protection Commission

LD3001235892 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 0200 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Sergey Tereshchenko, head of the republican government, has set up a special commission under the Cabinet of Ministers. Its aim is to assume permanent control during the implementation of the president's decree on social protection of the population. Although it is a tough measure, it is a necessary step to take because of the present situation, whereby the implementation is not being conducted properly.

The commision is headed by Karamanov, state councillor of the republic, with the first heads of ministries and departments, representatives of the Kazakhstan Trade Union, and of the Kazakhstan consumer union coordinating the work on supporting the people with low income and contact with similar organizations in the regions.

Aral Sea Declared 'Ecological Disaster Zone'

LD0402174892 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1600 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] The Kazakhstan parliament has adopted a resolution which will make it possible to improve living conditions in the Aral basin area in Kazakhstan. The document, sent to the media today for publication, says that the situation in the region has reached a state of crisis because of the continuing drying up of the Aral Sea. The equilibrium of the natural environment has been upset and the health and living conditions of the population have deteriorated sharply.

To ensure the social protection of the people and to maintain and gradually restore the sea, it has been deemed expedient to declare an ecological disaster zone for all rayons of Kzyl-Orda Oblast, the town of Kzyl-Orda, and a number of rayons of Aktyubinsk, Chimkent, and Dzhezkazgan Oblasts.

The Cabinet of Ministers has been instructed to grant local residents benefits and compensation. In conjunction with the republic's Academy of Sciences, it should table a bill for examination at the upcoming session of the Supreme Soviet on establishing legal ecological and economic requirements for commercial and other activities and the social protection of the population, which is suffering from the ecological catastrophe in the Aral basin. The government has been asked to undertake other specific and effective measures to clear up the situation in the Aral basin.

Petrochemicals Plant To Be Built in Pavlodar

LD3001235192 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 0200 GMT 27 Jan 92

[Summary] Kazrevyu Agency reports that a protocol has been signed in St. Petersburg on building a petrochemicals complex in Pavlodar by Pavlodar Khimprom production association, the joint U.S.-Soviet enterprise (?Amrus SPB), and the joint stock company (?Patronat-St. Petersburg). In the very near future, the complex is to produce around 40,000 tonnes of ecologically clean, high quality engine fuel components per year, as well as around 200,000 tonnes of monomers for use in the production of plastics. These have never been produced before in Kazakhstan. In establishing the Pavlodar complex, Kazakhstan will be participating in the U.S. state clean air program.

Turkmenia

Foreign Ministry Denies Afghan Arms Supply

OW0502163292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Turkmenia's foreign ministry has refuted the allegations of some Western news media that Central Asian republics, including Turkmenia, supplied the Najibollah regime in Afghanistan with munitions.

Turkmenia has never shipped any weapons to Afghanistan, and has no intention of doing so, particularly now, declared its foreign ministry in a statement published in Ashkhabad on Wednesday [5 February].

President Niyazov Interviewed on Goals, Ties

LD0402144692 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1220 GMT 2 Feb 92

["Live Dialogue" interview with Turkmenia President Saparmurat Niyazov by NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA observer Sergey Parkhomenko, MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI observer Lyudmila Telen, and Niyazov's Press Secretary Orazdurdyyev, including phoned-in questions from viewers read out by participants; Niyazov and Orazdurdyyev in the Askhkhabad studio and Parkhomenko and Telen in Moscow]

[Excerpts] [Parkhomenko] Hello, I am Sergey Parkhomenko. I am an observer for NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA. The Ostankino studio is today continuing its series of "Live Dialogue" programs. With me today is Lyudmila Telen from MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, and we are to link up with Ashkhabad. At that end is Turkmenia President Saparmurat Niyazov and his Press Secretary Orazdurdyyev.

Ashkhabad, are you seeing and hearing us? [passage omitted]

Now we have communications and a picture link. I wonder, can they hear us in Ashkhabad?

[Niyazov] We can hear you and see you okay.

[Parkhomenko] Good day, Mr. President. Accept our apologies for these technical hitches. First of all, I'd like you to say a few words to our viewers. I'm sure you've got something to say. Please go ahead, you have five or six minutes at your disposal.

[Niyazov] I think that, since you've just spent quite a long time asking questions yourselves and been commenting in a less than fully informed way, I should start off by saying a couple of words at the beginning.

I'd like to greet the television viewers of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] on behalf of independent and sovereign Turkmenia. The independence and sovereignty of Turkmenia were the age-old dream of Turkmenia's working people and nation to have their own foreign and domestic policy aimed at upholding the interests of its people, to have a democratic and law-based state. This was the people's dream, and it came true at the end of last year.

A national referendum expressed the will of our people on independence and sovereignty. On 27 October 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic enacted legislation on independence and sovereignty. I consider that ... [changes thought] You were saying that on 18 March Turkmenia also voted in favor of concluding a Union treaty for the CIS. True, we wanted this, and we explained to our people that independence and sovereignty underpinned by joint efforts via a Union treaty of equal states could be the format to guarantee, in the new circumstances, mutual enrichment and mutual economic cooperation, permitting each nation and each former republic to develop independently with account taken of its national features.

However, I was a witness when the leadership of the former Union as a whole, and individual leaders, under the pretext of setting up a Union of Sovereign States and signing a Union treaty, really wanted to strengthen the old center. They wanted to create a command-totalitarian system as in the past, and, to put it bluntly, wanted a political declaration to arrange a return to the old days.

But when what we wanted fell through, we explained to our people that we could not see any promise in that, and said that now the way ahead is via independence and sovereignty among sovereign independent states.

Turkmenia's attitude to the Commonwealth is that the Commonwealth is not a state, not an administrative and legislative body. The Commonwealth is a consultative coordinating body, made up of heads of government of sovereign independent states. Now everything—policy, economy, national culture, and art—is determined by the sovereign states. In joining the Commonwealth of Sovereign States and regarding ourselves as one of the founding members, we think that this Commonwealth will not disunite us but rather unite us, taking account of the specific characteristics of each nation and each sovereign state and establishing mutual economic, political, and cultural ties.

I should like to thank our Commonwealth's Central Television for this opportunity to answer your questions now.

[Parkhomenko] [passage omitted] Mr. President, while my colleague and I were setting the scene here, quite a lot of questions were raised. Would you perhaps like to answer some of those—for instance, those relating to the party, to Turkmenia's foreign economic relations and aspirations? What can you say on this?

[Niyazov] Esteemed comrades, I think on this issue our position is clear. As regards the party: Of course the announcer Sergey Parkhomenko was not quite exact in saying that the party's property and structure have remained at their previous level. No, comrades.

We consider that, where the state structure of power is strong, the party's role is already entirely different. If one were to assess it from the viewpoint of the former partocracy, in which the party as a whole had arrogated the functions of power to itself, then we'd have had a different social situation. Now that we have to recognize various forms of ownership, market relations; now that we recognize cooperative ownership, entrepreneurship, business, in these conditions the role of the party—if, I stress again, the state structures are strong, in the observance of legislation, in observance of the Constitution—the role of the party is quite different.

Now, in December the congress of the Communist Party of Turkmenia—its work was suspended and there was created, within the membership of the Communist Party, there were more than 120 CPSU members—a new party has been created, the Democratic Party, which has quite different aims, different tasks, and in program and charter the Democratic Party recognizes a quite different kind of ownership. The main task now, in the period of transition, is precisely by evolutionary means to move from collectively depersonalized ownership to private, collective, concrete ownership. This changes the whole structure, both of the state and of the party and politics.

So the role of the party in these conditions ... [changes thought] Some speakers seemed to be saying that we don't have much of a multi-party system. Our position is that within the framework of the Constitution, within the framework of the laws, all public formations and political parties...

[Parkhomenko, interrupting] Mr. President, excuse me, [words indistinct]...

[Niyazov, interrupting] ... how can they exist?

[Parkhomenko] Lyudmila Telen would very much like to ask some supplementary questions on this subject. I'm sorry.

[Telen] Esteemed Mr. President, what you've been saying leads nicely up to my question. I'd like to quote something that you once said: We were and will be against parties that have no social basis and try to take advantage of others' mistakes to make a name for themselves. Could you please explain what you had in mind?

[Niyazov] I had in mind that there is a group of people ... [changes thought] Since 1986, [corrects himself] since 1989, we have been actively fighting the corruption that had set in during the years of the command-administrative system. We waged a tough and uncompromising campaign. Criminal charges have been brought against more than 4,000 people. Subsequently, all these charges have been proved, and the public fully informed. Then, when democracy set in, a so-called uncontrollable group of people who had been humiliated or had lost out began to issue public appeals on the streets, shouting slogans against the constitutionally elected authorities.

I'm not saying that this is endemic; it's only a few people. They have no precise policies or any kind of definite aims. They can't call themselves a party, simply because they can make a noise and create tension in places where the public congregates.

I believe that parties should be established in accordance with the law, as in any civilized state. We have enacted a law on public associations and parties, which provides a constitutional opportunity to found political parties. A group of like-minded people, having a specific aim, may petition the Ministry of Justice and, in accordance with the law, they can receive the right to found a political party. It's not that we're frightened that these political parties will create difficulties for us. Not at all. It's simply because the country, because of economic problems, the collapse of the former Union and disruption to economic links, is currently experiencing problems with food and production. In these circumstances, I believe that any party or public association wishing to be founded should act in compliance with the Constitution. But we are against branch organizations or parties from other states operating on the territory of our independent and sovereign country.

[Parkhomenko] Thank you, Mr. President. Now I'd like to hand over to our colleague, who has been very undeservedly forgotten there in the studio in Ashkhabad. He is press secretary to the president, Orazdurdyyev. Can you hear us? You probably have a host of questions you'd like to ask.

[Orazdurdyyev] Yes, I do. You might say that this question is in part to do with politics. The press is the fourth estate. Turkmenia is the sole republic in which the state has managed to retain control over the mass media. Many journalists, even those that previously espoused uncontrolled freedom for the press, now think that you have done the right thing. Do you still think so? Kurbanov, a journalist, Ashkhabad.

[Niyazov] I think the press must express the interests of the people, but in a transitional period, when the situation is too tense and any word that's let fall on the television screen or in the press could lead to mutual interethnic suspicion and give rise to unhealthy phenomena... [sentence incomplete as heard] If today the press—and in our country it is not so controlled, there's freedom—but still, if the media work within the Constitution and the law, I think that's a normal phenomenon. We're not muzzling anyone, but insofar as there are some ... [change thought]

Take the Democratic Party. Though some people call it the leading, ruling party, I think we do not allow even the Democratic Party access to televison without payment and without an order [zakaz]. Anyone who wants to express his opinion on state televison must, of course, negotiate this in accordance with the laws. In principle we are for pluralism and the democratic right to express one's opinions. But I also want to emphasize—and I want the journalists of Central TV to know this too—that in six years no one has been arrested or prosecuted in Turkmenia for his political views or political beliefs.

I think that is one of the signs that we're not doing anything in a repressive way. Where there's repression there would, of course, be political victims. But I think this indicates that we have freedom of opinion, freedom of thought. All that is free and permitted, but what we are against is for interethnic conflicts to be kindled through the media.

[Orazdurdyyev] There's another question being asked here by Mishcherin, a journalist, from Moscow. The other day you announced that Turkmenia intends to conclude a defense alliance with Russia. Why with Russia precisely? Does this mean that Turkmenia does not intend to create its own army?

[Niyazov] As an independent sovereign state, Turkmenia considers that armed forces should also feature among the attributes of statehood. When we signed the founding documents of the CIS, however, we had in mind that this Commonwealth—which [as the USSR] earlier had a clearly ordered defense system—could have, given an appropriate agreement, unified armed forces and unified strategic forces. But unlike the previous situation, each sovereign state should control [kontrolirovat] the presence of armed forces on its territory and should not permit the armed forces to intervene in civilian life.

With these aims in view, we proposed that the Commonwealth should have its own armed forces. But since there are various opinions on this, the Commonwealth is still distinguished more by declarations than by specific deeds. Time is passing. On our territory, there are strategic troops and combined arms troops. Their numbers far exceed the defense requirements of the sovereign independent state of Turkmenia. Therefore, we have proposed that if no unanimous view emerges in our Commonwealth regarding armed forces, we are in favor of their existence and activity controlled by the CIS. If this does not come off, then we are in favor of concluding a defense agreement with Russia, given that most of the armed forces on the territory of Turkmenia are today defending not only the interests of Turkmenia but also the southern frontiers of the whole Commonwealth.

It is therefore these aspects that are at issue, and we will continue to hold negotiations.

[Orazdurdyyev] Thank you. Any more questions?

[Parkhomenko] Yes, thank you. I have, to start with, just a little commentary to make about what Mr. President has just said regarding a way out of the difficulties that exist today relating to the army, for Turkmenia to work out its own military doctrine and sign an agreement on collective security between the five Central Asian republics. This is, strictly speaking, actually my question. What kind of relations are there? What are the prospects here? Are the five Central Asian republics really ready to create something like their own military bloc?

[Niyazov] No, no such matter has been examined in Turkmenia, and the leadership of Turkmenia believes that those armed forces on the territory of the independent sovereign state are defending the interests not only of the Central Asian republics but of the Commonwealth as a whole. So, we are in favor either of signing a joint agreement on the maintenance and on the role and functions of the armed forces situated in sovereign states within the Commonwealth itself, or of signing an agreement with Russia on a military alliance which would deal with the future maintenance of the armed forces on the territory of Turkmenia, since none of the Central Asian republics is able to take on even part of the expenditure for the troops situated on our territory. We have not talked about this, and I think that this idea of five republics having a military alliance is not one which our state is looking at today.

[Parkhomenko] Thank you, Mr. President. Lyudmila Telen, observer from MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, please go ahead.

[Telen] Mr. President, let me suggest that we shift away from military matters to strictly peaceful ones. The transition to the market. They say that the transition to a market requires strong authority. What is your appraisal of yourself? Do you believe that you have sufficiently strong authority or do you lack certain powers? That is the first thing. Second: What economic complications and economic contradictions with the members of the CIS would make you decide to withdraw your republic from the CIS?

[Niyazov] I think that the Soviet, the CIS, is not a legislative body, and any agreements signed by some of the states which make up this Commonwealth are not obligatory for those who do not agree with one matter or another. But, the economic relations between the former republics, now sovereign, independent states, are the most difficult thing. We in Turkmenia keenly sense the influence of economic relations. We are being forced in places to sever existing economic relations because the state cannot endure such major economic losses without passing them on to the taxpayers' shoulders or finding new sources.

What I mean is that Turkmenia gets 70 percent of its foodstuffs and consumer goods from the sovereign independent states, the former Union republics. This was the mistake of the former Prime Ministers Pavlov and Ryzhkov, who always believed that free prices could be introduced on consumer goods and on foodstuffs while keeping fixed prices on a number of fuel and energy resources and some raw material resources. Thus, we have a situation in which, last year alone, as a result of prices being increased, we began buying food on contract from Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, Belarus, and a number of others. Even meat, which we used to buy for seven rubles a kilo is now coming in priced 70-120 rubles. We used to buy butter for the usual price; now we are having to buy it in the Ukraine and a number of other sovereign states for 180 rubles [per kilo]. That is without even mentioning the tractors, the vehicles, which used to cost 7,000-15,000 rubles. Now these prices have risen in those states to 1,500,000-2,000,000 rubles. As a result, last year alone our state lost 19,000 million rubles. How can this be compensated for? Well, we honestly sold and handed over gas. Turkmenia is third in the world, after Russia and the United States, in the production of natural gas.

Our gas is used by all of the Caucasus states, the Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. What is the result? We sell it at fixed prices and receive prices which are 20 or 30 times higher on foodstuffs and consumer goods. Under such conditions, we are compelled to increase prices on fuel and power resources. We raised them last year. Imagine, we received between five and six rubles for 1 thousand cubic meters of gas. Last year we raised it to 34 rubles and this year to 870 rubles. I would not like anyone to be offended with the sovereign independent state of Turkmenia because we have raised the price of gas to a minimum of 800 rubles, to 870 rubles in order to cover at least 60 percent of the deficit in the budget existing today.

However, I would like to speak about world prices. In the world, the price of one thousand cubic meters of gas is $70-100. We have sold oil products, have extracted up to 17 million tonnes of oil. For a population of four million, these riches are huge. We sold a tonne of oil for between 15 and 70 rubles when it costs $150 on the world market. We sold up to one million Astrakhan furs for 15-20 rubles, but for some reason or another a fur coat sewn at some enterprises over the course of two days was sold sold for thousands or tens of thousands of rubles.

And so, I consider, as the president of a sovereign independent state, that it is an extremely unhealthy phenomenon when the added value to a part of the national income produced in a state is lost to another state. This is considered a normal phenomenon. For this reason, we are seeking ways to reach agreement, but we are also seeking alternative ways. We, first and foremost in our foreign policy, are cooperating with Iran, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. We are seeking ways to ensure ourselves, and we will conclude treaties for the sale of gas. Via these states as well [Niyazov interrupted, several words indistinct] ... during the course of three years, in accordance with mutual desire—this gives us nothing, we suffer tens of thousands of millions in losses every year.

[Parkhomenko] Here is a question from Babayev in Ashkhabad who asks the president: What is the attitude of Turkmenia to the problem of dividing the gold and diamond reserves of the former USSR?

[Niyazov] I think that Turkmenia, like all other independent states, has a right to its share, its own share of the diamond and gold reserves of the former USSR. I would like to say that in our view about 1,000 tonnes out of total 148 tonnes [as heard] which figure in accounts should belong to Turkmenia. We have been pumping out natural gas for 70 years and now we, in a town with 100,000 residents, have no decent drinking water and no housing with proper amenities. We are paid 5-6 rubles per 1,000 cubic meters of gas, 15 rubles for oil, 86 rubles per tonne of cotton—Turkmenia produces over 1,500,000 tonnes of cotton—while in world market, it costs $2,500-3,000. I think that the allegations that Turkmenia is a subsidized republic which receives aid should not be made at present. We bear grudges against none of the peoples, especially when we are aware that Russia is in a difficult economic situation, as are all other republics. The present transitional period, in which we are moving from one form of property to another, is very difficult.

I am in favor of relations between the states of the former USSR developing on the basis of trust, mutual advantage, and mutual respect. Distortions in the economy were not typical of just one people. Such was the system. That is why I think that, changing the system, we will coordinate these issues at talks in the CIS.

[Orazdurdyyev] Another question on money. (?Elismatov), a journalist from Tashkent asks: Turkmenia resisted more stubbornly than the others—for nearly six years—the introduction of ration cards and coupons, and yet a month ago cards were introduced in Ashkhabad. Aren't you repeating other people's mistakes? Isn't it better to introduce your own money straight away; after all, you've probably already started printing it.

[Niyazov] I think that we suggested on more than occasion organizing a ruble zone, and we suggested that we should not introduce our own currency but strengthen the role of the ruble, its weight. If the Russian leadership accepts our proposal, we shall try to join the ruble zone. If all of the sovereign states introduce their own currencies, then we are also preparing for this, like all the others. But we don't have any plans for this in the near future.

[Orazdurdyyev] Sergey, you asked a question at the start; if you don't mind, I'll repeat it because a similar question has also come in. (?Murad Sharif), from Ashkhabad, asks: Not so long ago it was suggested that Turkmenia join the economic organization which includes Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey. Will Turkmenia join this organization, and is there any intention to join other economic or political organizations of Muslim countries?

[Niyazov] Yes, we think that on occasion the portrayal of expansionist aims on the part of one country or another is exaggerated. We will join the economic community of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan, and we have already received common consent. We have indeed submitted a statement on joining the Islamic Conference Organization. We think that no one gained from the fact that we cut ourselves off with an iron curtain in the past, and the national, common roots of culture, art, and peoples don't need any barriers today, they need bringing closer together. It is here that we see one of the forms of cooperation. At the same time, we have submitted a statement on joining the UN and a number of international organizations. We don't think this infringes on the interests of any sovereign state. It's in the interests of the Turkmen people, and it's in the interests of all the nations and ethnic groups living on our territory.

[Parkhomenko] Unfortunately we have very little time left, and there is a rather wide-ranging question left. On 28 January a session of the Constitutional Comission of the republic's Supreme Soviet took place in Ashkhabad, dealing with a draft new Constitution—not a completely new one, perhaps, but amendments and addenda are to be introduced into the old Constitution, which was adopted in 1978. Mr. President, you said something on that occasion that I found very interesting. In this process, that is the reforming of power and state structure, it is important to avoid blindly copying other countries' systems of state structure; one must rely upon the history and traditions of the people and upon existing experience when one lays down the foundations of one's own Constitution. Could you explain what you had in mind here, and what form of state and what constitutional principles are at issue? If you can—we have only two minutes left, I'm sorry, thank you.

[Niyazov] A group of academic jurists is currently working on the draft of a new Constitution. On 18 February, the draft of the new Constitution will have its first reading at the session of the Turkmenia Supreme Soviet. The aim of changing the Constitution is that the change in ownership changes everything. We want the people to enjoy social protection precisely in this transitional period. It is always difficult to move from one state of society to another. With the change in ownership, the Constitution takes a different direction and has different aims. The experts are working on this. I think it will be possible to read about it in the documentation of the Supreme Soviet session on 18 February. [passage omitted]

Uzbekistan

Security Council Recommends Admittance to UN

OW0502022392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1738 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The UN Security Council passed by consensus a resolution recommending the General Assembly to admit Uzbekistan to the UN. The UN Secretary General sent a congratulatory telegram to the republic.

Background to Tashkent Student Unrest Examined

PM0402114992 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 30 Jan 92 p 2

[Article by special correspondents D. Sabov and I. Chernyak: "Hunger Riot in a Grain-Rich City—Afterword to the 'Tashkent Vacation'"]

[Text] We arrived in Tashkent at a time when the devastated campus was empty and its inhabitants had packed off to their various cities and villages on vacation. On the Tashkent-Karshi train the students finally unwound—they smashed all the windows, slashed all the seats, and drove out all the passengers. Then they got on board and set off.

Two students were killed. As of 24 January, 15 people were still in the hospital. Incidentally, there were as many militiamen hospitalized as students, some actually with gunshot wounds. We agree: People who come out onto the streets should not be shot at; people should not be shot at—period. But people should not throw stones either. Or destroy cars. Or burn kiosks. Or smash storefronts. There is no need, we think, to explain what a crowd in the east is capable of when it erupts with the war cry "Urr!"

Let us say straightaway: It is, to put it mildly, naive to present what happened as a students' rally with speeches by well-read, bespectacled youths. The young men and women living on campus are mostly from the provinces. Arriving in the capital to study, many of them found themselves for the first time in another world, with multistory blocks with elevators and running hot water. So we won't be talking about the democratic aspirations or the revolutionary spirit of the student population.

The cause of the Tashkent unrest is well known: the price of bread, the absence of coupons, and the generally difficult conditions of student existence. We agree: Even after the recent raise, a grant of 260 rubles [R] (plus allowances) is paltry, just as a pay of R350-380 rubles for a qualified journalist or doctor is paltry. Incidentally, a well-known doctor actually joked: "Soon we will have to go to medical school twice, because being a student is more profitable than working." He was not exaggerating much, especially insofar as after the incidents the higher education institutions have wrested some decent concessions; until the next jump in prices, it is possible to get by. Today the prices in Uzbekistan in comparison with, say, Moscow, are fair, but even here things are difficult. At the same time let us remark: Not to increase prices would be tantamount to suicide for the authorities; the shelves would empty in a moment. Let us also note well the fact that the demands to lower prices, from which everything started, somehow gave way imperceptibly to demands for the resignation of President Islam Karimov, for whom the overwhelming majority voted only two weeks ago. As if at the wave of a magic wand, the "hunger riot" quickly turned into an antipresidential riot.

We have had occasion to hear, both from the authorities and from the clergy, of the presence in the crowd of persons not of student age. We asked: Who are these persons? The question was left hanging. We approached it from another angle: Who stands to gain? Our interlocutors averted their eyes and ducked the question. The most frank turned out to be Zakhidzhan-khodzha, deputy chairman of the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Central Asia and Kazakhstan: "Let me draw your attention to the fact that the student unrest was preceded by an attempted spiritual coup. The actions and positions of the present mufti do not suit some politicians, and they are trying to install their own man in his place and to sow discord among the faithful. I am sure that these were the same dark forces who were on campus."

President Karimov has put forward his own version: Having stated that the opposition—"Erk" and "Birlik"-—had nothing to do with it, he pinned responsibility on certain opponents of Uzbekistan's sovereignty and its entry into the United Nations. "An Uzbek does not shoot an Uzbek." The Russian-speaking population was immediately alarmed: If this is a hint at Moscow, then a change in attitude toward Russians would not be long in coming. Rumors swept Tashkent that there were Europeans among the militia, which, however, was straightway denied by the authorities. The story has been modified somewhat, although it is still being stressed that it is still being treated as a case of provocation from outside. An unsensational report appeared in the papers that two people carrying a bag of grenades and a box of shells into Uzbekistan had been detained on train No. 23. The subtext is that the events in Tashkent were a thoroughly prepared provocation against Uzbekistan, and the arrest of the traveling malefactors is proof of this. However, journalists quickly made inquiries: Train No. 23 runs from Dushanbe to Moscow, and does not pass through Tashkent at all, and the "tourists" (of Tajik nationality, incidentally) were seized in Bukhara. So what has the student unrest got to do with this? We inquired at the Ministry of Internal Affairs why it had been decided to publish only part of the truth. "We did not want to offend our Tajik brothers," was the reply.

Shortly afterward, in conversation with a Tashkent journalist, the president seemingly accidentally let slip a "leak of information": The incidents had been organized by an opposing group within the government. The hint was understood in Tashkent.

...On 8 January TASS carried a small news item: "In Uzbekistan a law has been adopted abolishing the post of vice president... Vice President Shukrullo Mirsaidov by decree of Islam Karimov is appointed state secretary to the president." The event passed by virtually unnoticed. In Tashkent the incident was discussed in whispers. It was said that Shukrullo Rakhmatovich had rejected the post "to the president," after which he had gone home in his service car, thanked the driver for his work, and disappeared from public view. His wife Dilbar Yunusovna, who works in Uzbekistan's Chamber of Commerce, went on sick leave, and also no longer appeared at work.

We tried to phone the former vice president at home, at his cottage on the city outskirts, where the most esteemed people in the country live. The automatic telephone station stubbornly connected us with another subscriber. When yet again we were given the wrong number, a woman's voice informed us: "He has gone away, along with his wife." "Are you a neighbor?" "No, of course not, it is just that everyone is talking about it."

This keen interest in the person of Mirsaidov—the former chairman of the Uzbek Gosplan [State Planning Committee], and later the chairman of the capital's city executive committee—is explained by the fact that he has the reputation of being an influential person in the republic, respected not just by the shadowy structures but even by Salim and Gafur—the powerful and extremely well-known (not only in Tashkent) "traders." Mirsaidov is also called the secret director of the October "mutiny" of a large number of deputies against President Karimov. Be that as it may, so far there has been no official announcement of his complicity in the student unrests, and there is hardly likely to be any such announcement.

"The scenario of the student unrest is very reminiscent of the Fergana scenario," we were told by one of Karimov's retinue, who wished to remain anonymous. "But I am sure that the true culprits will not be found; if they do find anyone it will be small fry. Not because the president does not want to find them, however. But the structures involved are just too deep..."

Of course, it is possible with European high-mindedness to seek for an answer to the question: Who gave the order to fire? (We, incidentally, admit the possiblity of the most simple answer: No one. According to eyewitness testimony, the State Motor Vehicle Inspection Administration details and the patrol-sentry services, which restrained the crowd of many thousands for the first three hours, had neither shields nor truncheons. After one onslaught too many, the militiamen—who are after all also human—could simply have panicked).

However, no one can arrive at the truth. It is possible to search long and hard for an explanation; the delay in payment of grants and coupons can be explained by malicious intent or simply inept bungling, but the fact remains: The students were brought to a boiling point. To us, something else seems more important—it is hardly appropriate to talk of "spontaneous revolt," or about the battle being waged today in Uzbekistan between the "partyocrats" and the "democrats." In our view the picture is somewhat different here. Since time immemorial the republic has been been the scene of clan rivalry—the Tashkent, Bukhara, Fergana, Khorezm, and other clans. In recent years this battle has moved from being a covert to an open struggle, and the fact that the leaders are now appealing to the grassroots is of no little significance. Yesterday believers were the "lever"; today it is the students. Who it will be tomorrow remains only to be guessed at. "The conflict is far from being extinguished; in the near future a lot more could happen," Zakhidzhan-khodzha eventually told us, and he is probably not far off the truth. Likewise not far off the truth are those who claim that the main political forces in the republic today are trying to exploit the tragedy for their own purposes. For example, it benefits the government to present the incident as a minor, swiftly localized conflict, and the opposition to inflate it as much as possible (is this not the source of the rumors of dozens of fatalities?)

Without going into detail, let us to try to assess who in the upshot gained and who lost out on this incident. The students have made clear gains. They have obtained another increase in grants, a daily R5 supplement for meals, and 50-percent price reductions in the campus canteens. The hostels on the campus will probably be hastily renovated, curtains will appear in the windows, and rugs and television sets in the corridors.

"Birlik" has also notched up points. Quite apart from the fact that its leaders managed to calm the crowd, which has strengthened the prestige of the national democrats in the student community. One of the main results of the incident is that the president has promised to register all the republic's political parties, and now "Birlik" will come out into the open—along with the Islamic Revival Party.

The official opposition—the "Erk" party—has, on the other hand, lost out. Especially its leader, the poet Mukhammad Salikh, Karimov's rival in the recent elections. According to the testimonies of Tashkent journalists, the crowd pelted with stones the erstwhile idol of the student community.

As for the "dark forces," they have yet again demonstrated their might, unequivocally reminding the authorities that they must be reckoned with. The militia have turned out to be "scapegoats"; they are being hammered by everyone, including the president.

Incidentally, as regards Karimov, things are more complicated. Undoubtedly, he has lost one of his main trump cards—the image of the guarantor of stability in Uzbekistan. However, the politician's art lies in extracting profit from the worst situation. It would appear that the president is managing to do just this. At any rate, after the unrest appeals to the president from deputies appeared in the newspapers, asking him to "personally see to the selection and composition of the government, including in it his comrades in arms, his true helpers." And last Friday, Islam Abduganiyevich had already introduced a new prefect in Khorezm. According to some forecasts the future will bring a serious reshuffle of cadres, and, that means, the reinforcement of No. 1's positions.

Let us recall: The cost of all these pluses and minuses was the lives of two human beings.

National Democratic Party Moves Reviewed

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[Text] Although the National Democratic Party of Uzbekistan [NDP] controls the country's official departments, it has taken significant steps to establish a multiparty system. Following student demonstrations on 16 and 17 January, Uzbek President and NDP Head Islam Karimov promised that all the political parties would be registered. This will lead to significant changes in the republic's internal politics.

Uzbekistan is one of the most stable republics in the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. The NDP has declared itself the legal heir to the Uzbekistan Communist Party, but it dissociated itself from that party's ideology and transferred 70 percent of its assets and property to the people.

The opposition consists of the Unity Party [Birlik Partiyasi], which has not been registered but which has political experience, and the Erk Party [Erk Partiyasi], which splintered from the Unity Party to register as the first official opposition party. These parties support Uzbekistan's independence and uphold economic reforms. NDP Second Secretary Aziz Nasirov has said that the NDP is not a communist party hiding behind a mask. Its program and methods are very different. When the old Communist Party was in power, communists were in the majority in its various departments. The Uzbekistan Communist Party had 700,000 members, but the NDP is made up of 350.

According to Nasirov, the republic's leaders' main objective is to cooperate with the opposition to maintain Uzbekistan's prosperity, independence, and security, according to the will of the citizens, and to safeguard international peace. Nasirov said that he is confident peace will prevail in Central Asia, because the people have become used to it. He believes that the democratization process will be maintained. Unlike many other countries, Uzbekistan's presidential elections held alternative elections, on 29 December, when Islam Karimov secured 86 percent of the vote.

Further on Challenges

PM0502141592 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 1 Feb 92 First Edition p 2

[Unattributed report: "Because That Is the Way the People Are Raised"]

[Text] The National Democratic Party of Uzbekistan [NDPU] has a virtual monopoly of positions in the official structures of Uzbekistan. After the student disturbances Islam Karimov, leader of the NDPU and president of the republic, promised to register all political parties. This should inevitably lead to changes in the republic's internal political situation, which is considered one of the most stable in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The NDPU has declared itself the successor to the CPSU on the territory of Uzbekistan, but it has abandoned the ideological legacy of the former ruling party and stated that 70 percent of party property will be returned to the people. The "Birlik" Party, which is not yet registered, and the "Erk" Party, which left it and became the first officially registered opposition force, constitute the opposition. They are all committed to Uzbekistan's independence and in principle support the economic reform.

The NDPU, Aziz Nasyrov, second secretary of its Central Conference, has stated, is in no way the "CPSU in new garb."

According to Aziz Nasyrov, the Uzbekistan leadership's main task is to maintain civil and ethnic peace through cooperation with opposition parties on the basis of a common desire for the republic's prosperity and independence. In general, Aziz Nasyrov expresses confidence, "the situation in Central Asia will be calm because that is the way the people are raised."

...But "Erk" Thinks Otherwise

Mukkhamad Solekh considers that the NDPU is the same old CPSU: "The same people remain in power and sit in the same seats they did before the putsch and before 1988." The opposition parties are weak for the time being, said Uzbekistan People's Deputy Marat Zakhidov: "The NDPU has no future, while parties like 'Erk' can still gain support," he added.

The president, however, constantly stresses that Uzbekistan's path is the path followed by Turkey—the creation of a civilized, secular state.

Armenia

Yerevan Welcomes Talks on Nagorno-Karabakh

OW0502133292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1134 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Yerevan welcomes Russia's suggestion that spokesmen for Armenia and Azerbaijan should meet in Moscow to discuss the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent was told at the office of Armenia's President Levon Ter-Petrosyan. This suggestion was made in Istanbul on Monday [3 February] by Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev in the framework of a conference of foreign ministers from Black Sea countries.

"Armenia has always believed that such contacts can only be useful", said a member of the president's office. According to him, it's not clear yet who will lead the Armenian delegation to the proposed conference in Moscow, though the likeliest candidate is Armenia's Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan.

Official on Karabakh Role in Talks

MK0502115792 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 5 Feb 92 pp 1,3

[Liana Minasyan article: "'The People of Karabakh Must Take Part in Talks Themselves'"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Bagan Shirkhanyan, counselor to the Armenian president, told NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA's correspondent: "The Azerbaijan troops' wide-ranging offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh that began 31 January was not unexpected. Azerbaijan began to set up its own armed forces a long time ago, expending tremendous material resources. We had information that troops were massing on Karabakh's borders. Everyone now realizes for what purpose. The situation is special in that previously these troops were officially operating with the Soviet Army. Since August they have lost that backing. The Azerbaijan leadership has for four years seen only one way to settle the Karabakh problem—to capture the territory and deport the population. That is their problem.

Having said that the war with Karabakh would proceed to its victorious conclusion, Mutalibov has still not seen the futility of such a war. The borders between Karabakh and Azerbaijan today follow the lines of trenches, and the people of Karabakh will be able to stand up for themselves, just as they have done throughout these four years, in inhuman conditions. The possibility of the Armenian and Azerbaijani foreign ministers' meeting in Moscow with [Russian] republic Foreign Ministry mediation was discussed in Istanbul (the reference is to the meeting of representatives of the Black Sea littoral countries—NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA). Mutalibov supposedly agreed. But I think that this round of talks will bear no fruit even if third or fourth countries take part: Azerbaijan must first give up its aggressive policy and its hopes of capturing and destroying Karabakh. At the beginning of the century, they tried and were successful. This is impossible now, and its people's opinion must be taken into consideration.

I think that it is quite logical and right for the people of Karabakh to try to secure the right to participate autonomously in the talks—Azerbaijan's unjust policy has brought this about, and it is now reaping the fruits of that policy. A political solution to the conflict is for Azerbaijan to recognize the Karabakh people's right to live on their land as they want to do. This is a reality that many people will have to accept in time. A year ago few people could have imagined that the republics would secure independence—today this is a fact. If people had understood the need for this before, events might have developed differently. A logical process of historical development is under way: the acquisition of independence. The sooner that people realize that this process cannot be suppressed, the sooner peace will come to Karabakh.

Government To Fix Prices of State Products

NC0402185892 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1630 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Excerpt] The Armenian Council of Ministers met today under Vice President and Prime Minister Gagik Arutyunyan. The meeting discused various matters pertaining to the social and economic life of the republic.

To regulate the sale of consumer goods and taxation under conditions of price liberalization, an interim regulation on organizing trade was introduced. Accordingly, all fixed-price [word indistinct] goods produced in the republic's state enterprises can be sold in trading enterprises, regardless of the form of ownership of these enterprises, at prices set by the state.

The Trade Ministry was instructed to present proposals to the government within a week on regulating the sale of vital foodstuffs to be sold at fixed prices. [passage omitted]

Minister Cites Need To Reopen Nuclear Station

NC0402213892 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] According to YEREKOYAN YEREVAN, Armenian Energy and Fuel Minister Sepuh Tashchyan told reporters that operation of the Armenian nuclear power station is a must today because of the energy crisis in the republic. The minister noted that Armenia has no choice but to reopen the station, but he stressed the importance of safety measures to ensure peaceful use of the atom.

Azerbaijan

Official on Control Over Former USSR Troops

LD0502181592 Moscow RIA in English 1429 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] Baku, RIA—Military units of the former USSR deployed on the territory of Azerbaijan must be placed under the republic's jurisdiction, said vice-chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan Tamerlan Karayev at a meeting with cadets and lecturers of the Caspian Military Academy. He pointed out that the staff of this higher military school will be guaranteed normal conditions for functioning if it serves the interests of Azerbaijan and abides by its laws.

Over the fifty plus years of its existence the academy has turned out a large number of top-class specialists. As admitted by the head of the academy, Leonid Zhdanov, however, there have been few Azerbaijanis among the graduates.

Russia Could Become 'Enemy' Over Armenia

LD0602093192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0800 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Representatives of Azerbaijan's political forces and public organizations are holding a meeting in Baku on the problems of Nagorno-Karabakh. Prime Minister Gasan Gasanov addressed the meeting. According to Gasanov, reports the INA agency, the political situation could develop in such a way that Russia becomes the enemy of Azerbaijan. The reason for this is the recent agreement on mutual assistance between Russia and Armenia. In the opinion of the Azerbaijani prime minister, the Karabakh problem will not be solved by military means. He spoke in favor of convening an international conference of those states that border on Azerbaijan and Armenia, with the participation of the United States.

People's Front Opposes UN Troops Deployment

LD0502181492 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1536 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Politics" section: "Azerbaijan against bringing in UN troops into republic"—headline]

[Text] Baku—The People's Front of Azerbaijan supports the statement of the republic's president to the effect that the UN troops should not be brought into Azerbaijan for the purpose of settlement the Karabakh conflict. on February 5 Deputy Chairman of the People's Front of Azerbaijan Niyazi Ibragimov stated to PF [POSTFACTUM] that the sovereign Republic of Azerbaijan will never agree to some military presence. More detailed and specific evaluation of this proposal, according to Ibragimov, would be given on February 5 at a meeting of leaders of political forces and public organizations of the republic to which the representatives of the state administration bodies were invited as well.

The evening before the session of the Republican Council of National Security was held, chaired by Azerbaijan's President Ayaz Mutalibov. During the session the situation developing in Nagorno-Karabakh and adjoining areas of Azerbaijan was examined as well as the progress in implementation of measures aimed at protecting the Azerbaijani population.

Aide Cited on Independence, Arab Ties

PM0502111392 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Feb 92 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Azerbaijan Information Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We Reject Political Domination and Do Not Seek Tutelage of Other Empires"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Bureau—Azerbaijan's Information Minister Sabir Rustum Khan has emphasized that after the end of the Soviet Union the new independent Islamic republics, "80 million Mulsims," are in great need of cultural and spiritual ties with the Arab states. He said we have deep and fraternal feelings toward the Arab world, which is close to us both culturally and historically. Some of these countries can assist us in the latest technologies, which have bypassed us in recent years, in addition to helping us consolidate the spiritual and religious spheres and restore the spirit of Islamic traditions in our daily life.

In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Sabir Rustum Khan said: We have extricated ourselves from the domination of one empire and do not want to be subjected to the domination of another. We also reject the exploitation of religion in political actions.

He added that Iran has 23 million Muslims whose origin goes back to Azerbaijani nationality. We call that region southern Azerbaijan, but Iran insists on erasing Azerbaijani culture from their life, does not want to recognize their nationality, insists on calling them Persians, and prevents them from speaking or learning their mother tongue.

He said: In view of these tangible Iranian moves toward us, how can we, after the liberation of our will, accept Iran's domination?

He said that the two peoples in Azerbaijan and Iran share fraternal, heartfelt, and sincere feelings. The same applies to Turkey, since we have the same roots and the same history. We have long maintained complete mutual understanding, but we reject interference in our political and economic affairs.

He also said that our state's supreme ambition is independence, which is why we do not want the domination of another state. We know now that many states want to control Azerbaijan in one way or another, but independence is one of the ideals of the Azerbaijani people's fight.

Sheki City People's Soviet Established

NC0602101792 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0300 GMT 1 Feb 92

[Text] People's deputies from Sheki city and rayon met yesterday in accordance with President Mutalibov's decree merging the two soviets. The group officially merged and established the Sheki City People's Deputies Soviet. El'nar Mustafayev was elected chairman of the organization and Yashar Yulayev was elected his deputy.

Dzhingiz Efendiyev, chairman of the Sheki executive authority, participated in the meeting.

Mutalibov Decree Establishes Customs Committee

NC0602104592 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 0300 GMT 1 Feb 92

[Text] President Ayaz Mutalibov has issued the following decree establishing the Azerbaijan Republic Customs Committee:

To strengthen the economic basis of the republic and to maintain and safeguard Azerbaijan's economic and political interests, I have decided:

1. To establish the Azerbaijan Republic Customs Committee and to transfer the Azerbaijan Republic Customs Administration money and property to this committee.

2. To place the work of the Azerbaijan Customs Committee under the president's control.

3. To appoint A. Mamedov director of the Azerbaijan Customs Committee.

4. To have the Azerbaijan Republic Customs Committee draw up and submit for approval draft rules and regulations within 30 days.

5. To have the Azerbaijan Council of Ministers resolve the question of financing related to the customs committee and problems related to the committee's economic work.

This decree is effective the day it is made public.

[Signed] Ayaz Mutalibov, president of the Azerbaijan Republic

Georgia

Council To Resign When Stability Restored

AU0502183792 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1531 5 Feb 92

["Appeal by the Military Council and Provisional Government of the Republic of Georgia to the Population of Georgia"; place and date not given]

[Text] Countrymen, the victory of the democratic uprising has created a real basis for the construction of an independent, democratic, and free Georgia. We will only achieve this cherished goal provided that there is a (?great) national reconciliation, tolerance, and peace. As soon as they came to power, the Military Council and the Provisional Government declared: There will be no revenge and no repressions with regard to the supporters of the old authorities. Under conditions of peace and through joint efforts, we will work in the name of Georgia. Unfortunately, the adherents of the deposed dictatorial regime, by their destructive actions, came out against the process of stabilization, creating an extremely charged atmosphere and further exacerbating a situation that is already complicated enough and that is due to the political and economic crisis.

The Military Council and the Provisional Government of Georgia declare with all responsibility: All political forces or groups of citizens that interfere with the stabilization of the situation and that act, whether willingly or not, against the establishment of democracy in Georgia, against the implementation of vitally important economic reforms, and against social justice, a defense capability, and a strengthening of Georgia's international prestige act to the detriment of our national interests.

The restoration of a stable situation is the demand of the entire population of Georgia, and Georgian authorities will take all measures to accomplish it. The Military Council reiterates: As soon as stability and order are established in the country, the Military Council will consider its duties fulfilled and will resign. At that time, power will be fully transferred to the Provisional Government. It will become possible to set definite dates for the parliamentary elections and the approval of the regulations on elections. When the parliament is elected, the Provisional Government will resign and a new Cabinet of Ministers will be created.

We call upon all citizens of Georgia to take an active part in these positive processes.

'Overwhelming Majority' Support Authorities

PM0502165392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Besik Urigashvili: "Georgia: New Opposition Demands Military Council's Resignation"]

[Excerpt] Tbilisi—[passage omitted] In the Georgian capital 4 February was the most peaceful day in the past six weeks—no meetings and demonstrations. Actually, political life is being filled with new content. Following the "Charter-9" deputies' faction, Irakliy Tsereteli, the leader of the National Independence Party, stated his opposition to the present authorities. Vazha Adamiya, leader of the Merab Kostava Society, whose armed formations took a direct part in the combat operations against the armed forces of the deposed president, is also critical of the government and Military Council.

But the overwhelming majority of political parties and organizations support the present authorities. In a statement the Ilya Chavchavadze Society, which emerged under the communists and was persecuted by them, noted that the demand for the resignation of the Military Council is under present conditions political demagoguery and populism of the purest water to say the least. The Military Council, the statement says, as of today is the only organ capable of exerting at least some control over the situation. The social democrats and the provisional government political consultative council, which includes representatives of almost all the republic's political forces, have made a similar statement.

Increased Political Activity Characterized

PM0502115992 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 1 Feb 92 p 2

[Report by Major K. Litvinov: "Zugdidi Has Fallen. All Symptoms of Political Impassability in Evidence in Georgia"]

[Excerpts] Troops of the provisional government of the Republic of Georgia are in full control of the situation in the city of Zugdidi, which until recently was the last bulwark of the armed formations loyal to Z. Gamsakhurdia. The city was taken after a brief exchange of fire.

There was no particular rejoicing in Tbilisi at the taking of Zugdidi. In general, this can easily be explained. By the fact, in my view, that the situation that had taken shape in Zugdidi had given the opposing sides one more opportunity—maybe even the last one—to show the world that they are capable of resolving complex problems by means of dialogue and compromise. Alas, the opportunity was missed. The upper hand was gained by those who had more weapons and strength. Gamsakhurdia's supporters did not have this.

For them the struggle has been lost. [passage omitted]

You get the impression that Gamsakhurdia's supporters want to provoke a clash. They are deaf to appeals for a dialogue. Again there is reliance on strong-arm methods of resolving disputed issues.

However, it is not rallies and demonstrations in support of the former president that determine the situation in Tbilisi today. Increased activity on the part of representatives of political parties and trends is a sign of the times. It has to be said that the vast majority of society has a guarded attitude toward the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. T. Sigua, head of the provisional government, declared recently that there can be no question at present of joining the CIS. Local politicians are far more ready to forecast their relations with the West. Irakliy Shengelaya, chairman of the Christian Democratic Union ("Freedom Bloc"), believes that "Georgia will manage fine without the Commonwealth. For we have an opportunity to join the world community, to become a bridge between Europe and the Caucasus and between Europe and Asia, and to play a stabilizing role in the Caucasus." Nodar Natadze, chairman of the Georgian People's Front, is far more categoric. He believes that a new scenario for Georgia is being prepared...in Russia: "If you think on the grand scale, Russia and the Muslim world are by their nature allies, as they both oppose the West. Therefore, in no way is Russia interested in seeing a strong Western bridgehead emerge between them... As for Georgia's orientation, it has always been and will be Western, as Georgia is a Western country, an inalienable part of the Western world." He does not doubt that "the former imperial forces will do everything to force Georgia to ask to join the CIS."

G. Chanturiya, chairman of the National Democratic Party of Georgia [NDPG], is very active in establishing contacts with the West. While in Moscow he met with the ambassadors of many countries—which gave the Georgian Foreign Ministry grounds to declare: Official contacts of any kind with representatives of foreign states must be coordinated with it. A counterclaim by the NDPG, that Chanturiya was acting on the party's behalf, has so far gone unanswered.

As you see, political parties are coming round after the events of December and January and displaying ever greater activity. Some look with longing to the West, others do not want to hear anything about the CIS, and yet others usually allude to someone's imperial ambitions. All this indicates that the further development of events in the republic will be linked with the growing political activity of parties and public organizations. This is explicable: Hardly any time is left until the elections to parliament—they are planned for the end of April. Incidentally, it is not ruled out that under certain circumstances Gamsakhurdia will also participate in the elections.

S. Ossetian Leadership Defines Basis for Talks

PM0502171792 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 5 Feb 92 p 1

[ITAR-TASS report: "Lull After Storm"]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 4 Feb—In the past 24 hours the sociopolitical situation throughout the region's territory has remained stable. According to reports from the South Ossetia information committee press center, only on the outskirts of the Georgian villages of Goriyskiy Rayon, where there are supporters of the deposed Georgian president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, have isolated shots been heard. There have been no reports of casualties from the Ossetian side.

For the first time in the many months of the news blockade, today reports began to reach Tskhinvali of the fate of the inhabitants of the remote Ossetian villages of Tskhinvalskiy and Znaurskiy rayons. Reliable sources report that the gunmen have ceased punitive actions against the civilian inhabitants here and there have been no cases of the burning and looting of houses or the taking of hostages.

According to recent figures from the South Ossetia internal affairs ministry, during the armed confrontation between the Georgian and Ossetian sides on the region's territory over 400 Ossetians were killed, over 500 civilians were wounded, hundreds of people were taken hostage, and 120 people have disappeared without trace. Over 100,000 Ossetians have been driven from 102 population centers.

The South Ossetia leadership is prepared to hold talks with fully empowered representatives of the Georgian provisional government only after the ending of the armed conflict, the lifting of the economic isolation around Tskhinvali, and the unblocking of all roads.

Further Deliberation on Troops in Abkhazia

Deputies Meet Commanders

LD0602051192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Report from Sukhumi by correspondent Tengiz Pachkoria; from the "Novosti" program]

[Text] Subunits of Georgia's Military Council on the territory of Abkhazia's Galskiy Rayon have provoked an ambiguous reaction among the population and parliament of Abkhazia. Everyone is asking the question: Will these military units proceed to Sukhumi? Late last night, 50 kilometers from Sukhumi, in Ochamchira, several of Abkhazia's parliamentary deputies, leaders of law and order organizations and members of the strike committee met with representatives of the commanders of these military subunits. The military command asked if the railroad would be operating by 1400 today, a fact of strategic importance for all of Georgia, Armenia and Russia. Sulhumi's railroad workers met twice today.

Talks Continue

LD0602111392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] In Gali in the Abkhaz Republic, talks are continuing between representatives of the Georgian provisional government and the Abkhaz parliament. Reports claim that at the talks the government is insisting on bringing the armed forces into Abkhaz territory in order to put a stop to the activities of Zviad Gamsakhurdia's supporters. They are blocking the railway and organizing strikes and illegal meetings.

Calls Urge 'Universal Civil Disobedience'

AU0502183192 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1531 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] Despite the snow and cold and despite the fact that public transportation in the city is functioning poorly and many people have to get there on foot, supporters of Gamsakhurdia gather every day, beginning early in the morning, to hold rallies in the Sukhumi Constitution Square near the sea port. For three or four hours on end, without tiring and taking turns on the improvised rostrum before the microphone connected to a loudspeaker, the orators call upon the population to demonstrate universal civil disobedience.

So far, Gamsakhurdia's supporters have not in any way responded to what was said at the Abkhazian Supreme Council session about the acts of disobedience that they had conducted. The deputies declared with apprehension that all of this exacerbates the sociopolitical situation and undermines the economy that is collapsing even without all this.

The negotiations conducted by a group of deputies of the parliament with the strike committee have not had any results so far. Meanwhile, a quite large group of deputies, at the request of the numerous supporters of Gamsakhurdia, are demanding that the Abkhazian parliament give a political assessment of the events in Tbilisi and of the overthrow of the president by force. At the same time, some deputies of the parliament openly expressed their negative attitude toward the strikes and acts of disobedience, which they called illegal, at a scheduled meeting of the session of the Abkhazian Supreme Council.

Demonstrators Fired Upon; Gamsakhurdia Address

LD0502124792 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Yesterday several armed people in khaki uniforms burst into the Vokzalnaya Ploshchad metro station in Tbilisi. They opened fire on Gamsakhurdia's supporters who gathered there. Blanks were fired. [passage omitted]

In the meantime, in his address to the people, deposed president Gamsakhurdia called on them to fight and to restore legitimate power.

Interior Forces Form First Air Squadron

OW0602003292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The head of the air department of the Georgian Interior Forces, Col. [Colonel] (?Darwin) Rukhadze, has told our correspondent that the republic has formed its first air squadron.

He said the squadron included two aircraft and several helicopters, but he did not say what type they were.

Col. Rukhadze said Georgia's political and economic problems made it impossible to spend large sums on the creation of an air force, but he hoped the situation would improve in future, enabling the government to buy more planes and helicopters. There was a large aircraft-building plant in Tbilisi, he said, which manufactured MIG-25 fighters.

The colonel feared there might be problems with pilots, for the Soviet Air Force had had "very few" Georgian pilots. But he hoped non-Georgians would be willing to serve in the Georgian air force as well, since they would be given fairly high pay.

Envoy Says Diplomatic Visits 'Fruitful'

AU0302133692 Tbilisi SAKARTVELOS RESPUBLIKA in Georgian 31 Jan 92 p 1

[Report by SAKINFORM correspondent: "Twenty-Four Countries Have Recognized Georgia's Independence"]

[Text] Bulgaria has become the 24th state to recognize Georgia's independence. Explaining this fact in an interview given to a SAKINFORM correspondent, Tedo Japaridze, Republic of Georgia deputy foreign minister, drew attention to the following circumstance: The majority of states made the decision to recognize Georgia as an independent and sovereign state just before the New Year, and when it became clear that the opposition was taking power into its hands. These countries include Turkey, Iran, Canada, the United States, Algeria, Cuba, Egypt, and Libya.

At the invitation of the Bulgarian Embassy in Moscow, a Georgian delegation has been on a visit there. As Tedo Japaridze stated, there was a businesslike and friendly dialogue between the two countries on the prospects for establishing diplomatic relations. Considerable attention was devoted to the establishment of multilateral—economic, commercial, cultural, scientific—relations with Georgia's new government. He pointed out that it was necessary to renew the agreement that had been signed earlier between Bulgaria and Georgia. The republic's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has created a working group to prepare the corresponding document together with the Bulgarian side.

The sides discussed Georgia's and Bulgaria's positions regarding the problems of creating a Black Sea zone of economic cooperation that were to be discussed in Istanbul.

There was also discussion of the Turkish plan for a Black Sea community at a meeting between the Georgian delegation and the Greek ambassador. He stated the view of his country's Government that Turkish President Turgut Ozal's plan was interesting not only for the countries in the Black Sea basin but also for their neighboring states.

"Our delegation," said T. Japaridze, "has promised its support. Incidentally, the Turkish side's view is known concerning the fact that any state that is interested in becoming a member of the Black Sea community can join it."

The Greek ambassador stated that his government is ready to promote in every way possible the Republic of Georgia's integration into the various structures of the European Community. Greece has proposed to send to Georgia its own experts so that they can further the implementation of economic reform and privatization in the transfer to market relations.

In accordance with tradition, the Georgian delegation was invited to the Turkish Embassy, a country with which the republic has established close contacts in various spheres. The ambassador confirmed an invitation extended to a Georgian delegation by the Turkish Government to participate in a meeting of countries of the Black Sea community to be held in Istanbul. There was discussion of the question of a visit by a Georgian delegation to Ankara to hold talks with Turkish Government leaders within the framework of this meeting. The Turkish side stated that it was ready to support Georgia's participation in various NATO measures: conferences, meetings, etc.

"In my opinion, the Georgian delegation's visit to Moscow was a fruitful one and promoted the future development of business and friendly relations between the republic and foreign countries," concluded Tedo Japaridze.

New Agro-Industrial Issue Ministries Formed

AU0502175292 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Russian 1531 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] In order to improve the management of the agro-industrial complex, the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Georgia has abolished the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Foodstuffs Industry of the Republic of Georgia, and has created the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Georgia and the Ministry of Foodstuffs and Processing Industry of the Republic of Georgia.

Poll Reveals Popular Optimism Toward Future

OW0602043792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The people of Georgia are optimistic about their future. This conclusion was made by members of Georgia's Center for Sociological Studies on the basis of the latest public opinion poll.

As the center's leader Soso Kakubava told IF [INTERFAX], when asked if 1992 will be better than last year, 64.8% of respondents said "Yes".

44.6% of those questioned believe that at the moment developments in Georgia proceed in the right direction. 29.5% of respondents have a different view.

When asked about the human rights situation in Georgia, only 5.8% of respondents said that their rights are protected, while 34% said that there is no human rights protection at all.

Latvia

Russian Trade 'Threatened' Over Fuel Supplies

LD0502234992 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 0530 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] The implementation of the Latvian-Russian economic cooperation agreement is threatened from its very beginning, because the expected railway supply of gasoline did not reach Latvia yesterday. Latvian Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis called this action political pressure. If the gasoline is not received by 5 February, I will summon private entrepreneurs directly involved in fuel supplies. How they get the gasoline across the border is their own affair, the Latvian prime minister said.

Representatives of the commercial gasoline firm are, at least in words, prepared to supply the national economy's needs for gasoline, but this situation is exacerbating even more the rise in the price of food products, although at present a certain price ceiling has been reached. The food is in the shops not because farmers have produced too much, but because a certain purchasing power among the populace has been achieved. As soon as the fuel question is settled, Prime Minister Ivars Godmanis believed, we will be able to demand a lower purchase price for food products from farmers. At the same time, the Latvian prime minister acknowledged that, for private entrepreneurs, the price of gasoline undeniably will be very high.

Private Fuel Trade Ban May Be Lifted

LD0602000892 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1638 GMT 5 Feb 92

[From the "Domestic Market" section: "Latvian CM [Council of Ministers] to allow Private Trade in Fuel"—POSTFACTUM headline]

[Text] Riga—Chairman of the Latvian Council of Ministers Ivar Godmanis: If no gasoline is delivered from Russia in the nearest future the government of Latvia is going to lift the ban for the private trade in fuel.

How the businessmen transport the gasoline across the border—is up to them,—stated Godmanis on February 4 during the session of the People's Front of Latvia faction. —Fulfillment of the agreement on economic cooperation between Latvia and Russia is endangered from the very beginning because the delivery of gasoline which was expected on February 3 didn't come about on February 5,—stated Godmanis defining the situation as an attempt of the Russian partners to exert political pressure on the Latvian Republic.

Chairman of the opposition faction of the Latvian Supreme Soviet Ravnopravie (Equal Rights) Sergey Dimanis stated to PF: After the negotiations between the Latvian Government and Vice-Premier of Russia Sergey Shakhray on February 1 it could be surmised that the Russian leadership is tying issue of fuel deliveries to Latvia with the problem of the Army's withdrawal from the Latvian territory. To a certain degree the problem of the Russian internal chaos has been superimposing as well, but in serious terms, the crucial issue is Army,—said Dimanis.

Making comments on the Latvian prime-minister statement about his government's intent to transfer the fuel trade to the private sector Dimanis stressed that the Latvian businessmen were not able to solve this issue on the scale of the whole republic because they would have to face such problems as import licenses as well as clearly felt lack of cash roubles. The Latvian Government has to get used to the thought that in the East their neighbor is not some vague entity headed by unforcedly Gorbachev [as received] and fully disoriented nomenclature but the state which has clearly recognized its national interests and a different language should be used during the discussions with them as compared to several months ago,—stated Dimanis. [sentence as received]

The following prices of gasoline were introduced in Latvia starting February 5: AU-76 petrol—R10 [rubles] per liter, AU- 93 petrol—R13 per liter, diesel fuel—R9.1 per liter.

Commonwealth States Asked To Withdraw Troops

LD0502204892 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1700 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] The Supreme Council today adopted an appeal to the parliaments and governments of the states of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia appeals to the parliaments and governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States to recall without delay those officers, noncommissioned officers, their families, and soldiers now in the territory of the Republic of Latvia who have been drafted into the former USSR Armed Forces.

Mayor Asks Hard Currency for Services to Army

OW0602035592 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1414 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At his meeting with the military the Mayor of Ventspils, Latvia, Aivars Lemberg has demanded hard currency or power in exchange for foods supplied to the Army units of the former USSR.

The Ventspils garrison commander Aleksey Nesterenko replied that the Army had no spare fuel. He added that Russian soldiers in Latvia would receive food supplies under any circumstances, even if they will have to be airlifted.

The newspaper DIENA says the Mayor expects a reply by the end of the week. If the request is turned down, water, heating and power supplies will be turned off and food supplies suspended.

Accreditation of PRC Ambassador Postponed

LD0502232492 Riga Radio Riga International in English 2130 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Text] The accreditation of the Chinese ambassador in Latvia was postponed by the request from the Chinese side, the Latvia's Foreign Ministry informed. According to the Latvia's foreign minister, it could be possibly connected with the development of diplomatic relations between Latvia and China [as heard]. As we previously informed, China has passed over an official protest concerning Latvia's intention to establish relations with Taiwan.

Jurkans Comments on Future Role in CSCE

OW0602044292 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1414 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Latvia's Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans has said that Latvia should consider in detail its policies in order to join the CSCE structures in the most effective way. Jurkans was speaking in Riga on February after his return from Prague where he took part in the conference on security and cooperation in Europe.

The Latvian Foreign Minister said that his republic was faced with a number of obstacles hindering its normal activity in the international scene, such as financial problems, the nationalities question and the withdrawal of troops of the former USSR. Janis Jurkans said that at the talks with the military it was necessary to choose the correct tone, bearing in mind that disarray and uncertainty among the military, as well as political instability in Russia and tension in relations with the Latvian people were not a very favorable background for talks.

Parliament Approves Self-Government Law

OW0602033792 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1924 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On February 5 the Latvian Parliament passed a law on self-government. It establishes that self-governing districts must uphold the decisions of the government. In the event of violation or failure to carry out the laws of the government the general prosecutor may propose to parliament that the chairman of the self-governing region resign or that self-governing privileges be eliminated altogether. The regional council is responsible for developing and ratifying the region's budget. Government institutions are not allowed to interfere in budgetary matters.

Citizens Congress Seeks Anti-Crisis Cabinet

OW0602043292 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1414 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The ninth session of the Latvian citizens' congress has issued an appeal voicing the readiness to form a provisional anti-crisis Cabinet until the constitutional institutions of government are restored. The congress believes such a Cabinet should be formed, because the people's confidence in both parliament and government has been declining.

The congress says the future Cabinet's chief aim should be putting an end to the "occupation and colonization of Latvia", a stop to unlawful privatization, the return of real estate to the former owners, the preservation of government prices of essentials, restrictions on the political rights of former career bureaucrats and members of Soviet repressive agencies, and prerequisites for the survival of the Latvian nation.

Lithuania

Government Demands Share of Military Hardware

PM0602114692 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Feb 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Report by Nikolay Lashkevich: "Lithuania Claims Share of Military Hardware"]

[Text] Vilnius—The government of the Lithuanian Republic, in a special statement, has declared that the proportion of military hardware that was built with the republic's funds should be left at the republic's disposal.

The government pledged to grant social assistance to servicemen's families on condition that military units comply strictly with Lithuanian laws.

Economic Situation Could Be Critical Soon

OW0602030292 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1924 GMT 5 Feb 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Almost 100 Lithuanian firms are unable to work at full capacity due to a stop in shipments from Russia and other CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] nations. The economic situation in Lithuania may reach the critical point in 1 or 2 months. This was reported by the Minister of Economics, Albertas Simenas on February 4 at a meeting of the Commission on the Economic situation. It was reported that in the republics state factories 20 thousand workers were forced to stop working due to a lack of raw materials. This figure was twice that of the previous week's. It was noted at the meeting that Russia is completely ignoring an agreement signed last week by the Premier of Lithuania, Gediminas

Vagnorius and the Vice-Premier of Russia Yegor Gaydar on mutual shipments. All shipments to Lithuania are stopped at the border.

Sweden Takes Responsibility for Nuclear Safety

LD0502054492 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 0200 GMT 4 Feb 92

[Text] According to Jan Nistad, director of the Swedish Nuclear Safety Inspectorate, very important and expensive measures must be taken at the Ignalina AES [nuclear electric power station] which would enhance the safety of operation of the nuclear power station.

After working for several days at the Ignalina AES the Swedish experts presented a protocol to the Lithuanian Ministry of Power Engineering containing more than 20 points which could be implemented with the help of Sweden. The document will also be presented to the government of Sweden so that the government can discuss the possibility of helping the Ignalina AES. The head of the Swedish Nuclear Safety Inspectorate told the RESPUBLIKA newspaper that a decision was made by the government of his country to take care of nuclear safety in the entire Baltic region, and the Ignalina is one of the installations of this kind.

EBRD Announces Plans for Financial Aid

LD0202043192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1100 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Plans for financial aid to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have been announced by the Board of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Various economic projects in all three Baltic states will be financed by the bank. This was announced at a meeting of members of the board of the bank and representatives of the Baltic states in London. The board of the bank established that since September last year the privatization of industrial enterprises and other state-owned economic departments in Lithuania had proceeded at a satisfactory rate. Therefore,the bank is prepared to suport the subsequent process of privatization, reconstruction and modernization of Lithuanian industrial enterprises, to finance joint Lithuanian and foreign companies and to stimulate the investment of foreign capital in Lithuania. Among other projects, the international bank will finance the modernization of equipment at the Port of Klaipeda and Vilnius airport, cleaning lakes, rivers and the sea and reprocessing waste materials. The setting up of commercial banks and small commercial firms in Lithuania to improve conditions for commercial activity will also be supported by the bank.

State Bank Chairman on New Currency, Economy

LD0102092192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Interview with Lithuanian State Bank Chairman Vilius Baldisis by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] Maybe you will share with us your problems and difficlties. Lately the press has been attempting to exacerbate differences between the government and the Lithuanian Bank. Is this so, or is this simply sensationalism by journalists?

[Baldisis] Unfortunately, I must say that differences exist and that they are rather serious. They are linked with a different understanding of many strategic problems in the creation of the economic system of our independent state. First, we cannot agree that our modest currency reserves are used for the treatment of the perished currency of the other country or territory. This concerns the ruble. We cannot agree with other such administrative command methods used by our government in carrying out the economic reform.

[Reporter] Do you have in mind the unlimited purchase and sale of currency?

[Baldisis] First of all, I had in mind the decree, if one may call it that, by the prime minister to sell $2 million from the state currency fund for rubles. I also had in mind a decision to sell foreign currency, allocating certain sums from the state currency fund; this fund obtains currency from enterprises and organizations to sell for rubles—a currency that has actually already perished and is on the brink of catastrophe. Inflation is so great that even such states as Russia and Ukraine refuse to use the ruble or treat it. For inexplicable reasons, we think that it is possible to continue free convertibility of the ruble to foreign currency. This is very difficult to understand.

[Reporter] Are you the supporter of a speedy introduction of own national currency, or do you think it would harm Lithuania's economy?

[Baldisis] I would like to reply to this from two points of view. First, you know that a committee has been set up in Lithuania to introduce the litas, our currency system. It will solve all basic issues. Therefore, as member of that committee, I should abstain from any comment. On the other hand, my personal view is very clear: We must do this as soon as possible. This is the basic prerequisite for economic and political independence of the Lithuanian state. [passage omitted] Experts warn us that the change of the ruble to the new currency, the litas, alone does not mean anything. The whole currency system must be changed. An independent central bank must be set that is not only able to issue this new currency, but also to regulate it and to be independent from political, social, and other pressures from the government. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Economic experts at Vilnius University have great reservations regarding the government financial and banking policy. Do you support these claims?

[Baldisis] Regreatably, I must say that all these reproaches benevolently uttered by our scientists have some basis. This has been expressed lately in the policy pursued by our government in the sphere of banking and finances, and by the implementation of administrative methods and solutions, sometimes without considering their results. We are now, laying the foundations for our own currency system, for the stability of our litas, for its convertability. Ill-considered decisions and actions by the government put us in a position when, in the future, we may have very serious negative consequences in our currency and financial system. We will have to pay a very high price in efforts and negative economic phenomena to solve them. Unfortunately, these reservations are right. It would be nice if the government could listen to them. [passage omitted]